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ALTERNATIVE TO DRIFT

THE "anti-climax" of which the Tory Press and the speeches of the Opposition Leaders made so much, is the result of acute chagrin combined with political embarrassment. The Labour Government has not committed *hari-kari* before the altar of the orthodox economists; instead, by announcing a modest programme of cuts, it has compelled the Conservative Party to admit that what it wants is a real old-fashioned Geddes Axe. Mr. Butler's polished efforts to prove that his Party is really in favour of full employment and fair shares for all are now thrown into the dust-bin; and the Conservatives emerge in their traditional colours, advocating increased profits for the employer and a tougher line to the worker. In terms of political tactics the Government has done well enough; and it can probably reckon that, as long as full employment lasts, the country will be unlikely to elect a Tory Government.

There are more important things to do, however, than to outmanœuvre Mr. Churchill. At best, the Labour Movement's reception of Mr. Attlee's statement has been neutral; it is relieved by the moderation of the cuts, but uninspired by the framework of exhortation in which they are presented. For these cuts, however necessary in themselves to counter the danger of inflation, do not constitute a plan of action. For the Conservative, Geddism is the sovereign remedy for both the internal and the external problem. British industry, he believes, if set free from Government interference and granted the incentive of tax reductions, can be safely left to solve the problem. Mr. Attlee, however, like every other Socialist, knows that the budgetary savings deal only with the secondary internal problem and will have virtually no effect in bridging the dollar gap. If we are to retain full employment this must be done by quite different means.

But what means? Here Government spokesmen are either silent or lapse into moral prating. We all know by now that maximum production is necessary, and it is futile to tell us the same old story once again—particularly when British productivity in 1949 has far surpassed the target set by Sir Stafford Cripps. Lectures on production are a very poor *ersatz* for a policy, but they are all the Government has given us. Hence the neutrality of the Labour Movement, which knows quite well that the cost of devaluation will be borne overwhelmingly by the working-class.

There are three things which the Government must do if it is to avoid a succession of crises each bringing a further dose of gradualist deflation. In the first place, it must recognise that the fate of this country now depends more on the actions of the Cabinet than on the efforts of the workers. A reduction in our grandiose foreign commitments—which have involved us in giving far more aid to others than we have received from America—the reconstruction of our Defence plans and a new Canadian agreement, based on sterling payments for wheat, could close the gap without any further increase in productivity. Instead of lecturing the workers, Mr. Attlee should look round the table at 10, Downing Street and calculate the cost to the country of the policies of Mr. Bevin, Mr. Alexander and Mr. Harold Wilson. When he has done this, he may at last realise why the worker is a little tired of his appeals. The worker rightly suspects that the crisis, with which we are faced, is due not to a failure of productivity but to the Government's weakness in failing to scale our foreign policy down to the level of our industrial strength.

In the second place, the Prime Minister must at last tackle the officials of the Bank of England and the Treasury. By successive ineptitudes they have lost us a very large proportion of the wealth created by the workers since 1945. At the very least, exchange control must be made effective even if this means restricting the movement of capital within the confines of the sterling area.

Next, Mr. Wilson's ill-considered bonfire of controls must stop. Discriminating controls backed by real sanctions, such as have been attempted in the engineering industry, must be substituted for the present mixture of *laissez-faire* and exhortation. The only alternative to deflation is controls designed to assist the nationally useful firm and to penalise, or in the last resort to take over, the nationally useless.

Lastly, the Government must begin to make fair shares for all a reality under the new conditions of devaluation. The extra tax on distributed profits and the withdrawal of the permission to issue bonus shares are small steps in the right direction. But nothing will suffice in this field except a capital levy. It should be included in the election programme and in the next Budget.

At the other end of the scale comes assistance to the very poor. It would be disgraceful for a Socialist Government obstinately to allow the weakest section of the community to fall into destitution. By next summer the cost of living will have risen by at least 10 per cent. since the national assistance rates were fixed in the summer of 1948. It may be impossible to raise the basic rates either of the aged or the war pensioners. But what about the National Assistance Board? No person receives aid from it unless his or her need is very great indeed, and the standard of living provided by the Board is in effect the national minimum. It would cost about £6 millions a year to make up for the rise in prices since 1948 by a proportionate increase in the scale of assistance. This would be equivalent to a half-penny on income tax or twenty new jet bombers. Yet Mr. Attlee and Sir Stafford Cripps say that they cannot afford it. It is this sort of refusal to respond to the deepest traditions of British Socialism which is causing the neutrality inside the Labour Movement to which we referred. If there is a case

for the lowest paid worker receiving an increase, how much stronger the case for the recipient of national assistance

Capital Retrenchment

Three serious questions are, first, the extent to which the capital cuts, especially those in fuel and power and building, will delay improved efficiency; secondly, the effects of the educational cuts on building and on school reorganisation plans under the Butler Act; and thirdly, the reactions, mainly not likely to be felt much till next year, on the cost of living. The fuel and power cuts, we are told, will affect only long-term projects; but the reduction in building is bound both to slow down new factory construction and, to some extent, to hamper mobility of labour through housing shortage. It may also cause awkward pockets of unemployment in the case of building and civil engineering workers not easily transferable to other jobs. In the educational field, schools are spared; but other types of educational building—Universities, Technical Colleges, County Colleges, etc.—will presumably be seriously affected, and the slow-down in providing transport will react adversely on the re-planning of rural primary and secondary education.

The Cost of Living

The ultimate impact on the cost of living is less easy to forecast. It will certainly be affected by the increased charge for school meals and, for what it amounts to, the new charge for National Health Service prescriptions. But much more important than these, in relation to living costs, are the decontrol and desubsidisation of fish and the removal of the subsidy on feeding stuffs, the cost of which will in any case go up as a consequence of devaluation. The price effects will not be known until the farmers and the Government have struck a new bargain about agricultural prices early next year; but they may well be substantial for both meat and milk. In conjunction with the direct effects of devaluation, they threaten a rise in living costs fairly early in 1950 that will make it impossible to hold the wages front without widespread concessions to the lower-paid workers, or to keep children's allowances at their present inadequate level.

Wages: A Test Case

It fell to the lot of the Treasury this week to be the first to take the field against an important wage-claim since the programme of economies was decided on by the Government. The proposed advances to the top grades of Civil Servants had already been postponed in view of the crisis; and the general run of the Service can hardly have been surprised to find the Treasury taking a stiff line. The decision, however, rests not with the Government but with the independent Arbitration Tribunal which deals with Civil Service claims; and this body will find itself in the difficulty that just before the crisis it gave a fairly generous award in favour of the Post Office workers, who were lucky in the timing of their demands. Public servants in Great Britain have been, on the whole, relatively well paid. The Service has, however, its low-paid grades; and it will have to be considered whether some concession can be made in order to avoid an appearance of unfairness between the Post Office workers and the rest, as well as to meet hardships already accrued or accruing. Thus, a sort of test case has reached the arbitrators while the T.U.C. General Council is still uneasily debating its policy, and while the Engineering and Shipbuilding Confederation is faced with the employers' request that it withdraw its application for an all-round advance.

The Marshall Aid Share-out

It looks as if the Americans, after toying with the idea that, in future, Marshall Aid should be distributed in accordance with national merits rather than national needs, have come round to the view that, for the remaining years of E.C.A., whatever Congress makes available had better be shared out in the same proportions as in the current year. Distribution according to need, it is argued, puts a premium on doing nothing; for the less a country does to put its house in order the more it stands to get. Distribution according to merit, on the other hand, would necessarily shift the entire burden of decision to E.C.A.; for the nations represented on O.E.E.C., which found it hard enough to agree about their relative needs, would certainly never reach agreement about their respective deserts. It seems clear that the intention is to make large progressive reductions in total aid for the two outstanding years; and E.C.A. is already exhorting American traders and consumers to help in squaring the account by buying many more European goods. The Wayne Taylor Mission has compiled a list of 260 products it considers suitable for the American market on which import duties at present exceed 25 per cent. of the value, and has also recommended a much-needed simplification of American Customs methods, in order to make it easier for European exporters to know how they stand. The Mission also favours increased American investment in Europe, but denies that this can close the gap without greater readiness to accept imports.

Mr. McCloy and the Germans

If there persisted any doubt as to what Mr. Dean Acheson meant, when he said some time ago that the recovery of Western Germany was to be the cornerstone of "European recovery" under the Marshall Plan, Mr. McCloy, the new American High Commissioner, is setting the doubt to rest. Since his arrival in Germany, it is true, he has taken several steps to show that the United States is to remain in supreme control of the West German economy. One of these steps was to fix the new rate of exchange of the Deutschemark. Another was to supervise the details of the new trade agreement between West and East Germany, and to allow it through only in his own good time. But this strict American control, clearly enough, is not regarded by Mr. McCloy as at all incompatible with close collaboration between the United States and the owners of German industry. On the contrary, Mr. McCloy's pronouncements in the last few weeks suggest that this collaboration may shortly become partnership. Even the Foreign Office is a little ruffled at the prospect. It was obvious, in the first place, that the new High Commissioner would use his influence to stop British dismantling. What was far from obvious—and, if true, is infinitely more serious—is Mr. McCloy's reported backing of the Germans in their reluctance to take part in the newly-created International Authority for the Ruhr. The Americans are now thought to be favourably impressed with the ingenious German idea of transforming the Ruhr Authority into a sort of super-cartel for the heavy industries, extractive and processing, of the whole industrial area of the Ruhr, the Saar, Lorraine, Luxemburg, and Belgium. What was conceived as a means of preventing German rearmament would thus become an instrument to dominate the core of West European industry.

Recognition of the New China?

By all accounts a decision in principle has been taken by the British Government to grant full recognition to the Chinese Communist Government in Peking. An announcement of the act of recognition is, however, apparently being delayed while discussions of the terms are going on both with the United States and France and with interested British Commonwealth countries. To judge from statements made this week by Dr. Evatt and Mr. Pearson, the Australian and Canadian Ministers for External Affairs, the inclination of some Dominion Governments will be to make recognition, and the admission of New China to the United Nations, conditional on specific guarantees being forthcoming from Mao Tse-tung that his administration will carry out all its international obligations and will respect the territorial integrity of neighbouring countries, including Malaya and Hongkong. Mr. Pearson has even gone so far as to insist that a prerequisite for recognition must be an "assurance" that the Peking Government is not "controlled" by Moscow. To impose such conditions and, still more, to ask for such meaningless assurances would be, in our view, highly unrealistic. Without goodwill in Peking, guarantees would not be worth the paper on which they were written. Moreover, though it would be quite legitimate for the British Government to seek, by negotiation, to protect British interests both in the Chinese market and in South-East Asia as a whole, it is impossible to begin diplomatic discussions with Peking until the Government there has been recognized. The longer recognition is delayed, the less change will there be of a tolerable *modus vivendi* between the New China and the West.

President Truman's Advisers

There were good reasons for President Truman to accept the resignation of Dr. Nourse from his three-man Council of Economic Advisers. For some time Dr. Nourse has been in a minority on the Council. As an orthodox deflationary economist, he has opposed the Keynesian policies, especially controls and budget deficits, of Leon Keyserling, who sympathises politically with the President's Fair Deal programme. It is the task of the Council to draft the President's economic policy, and this has increasingly become a political matter. When, last week, Dr. Nourse launched a full-dress attack upon the Administration's economic policy, his resignation was inevitable. He singled out farm subsidies and deficit spending for special criticism, saying that such policies "dishonoured our fathers and defrauded our sons," and went on to denounce the Trade Unions for seeking shorter hours, expensive pension schemes, and restrictive labour practices. His criticism of the Trade Unions was sharpened, no doubt, by the present coal and steel strikes, which have already cost the United States some twenty million man-days. But it was clearly impossible for him to go on offering such conservative advice to the President, who is more intent than ever on legislating America into the Welfare State. Mr. Truman seems to have learnt the basic economic lessons of the New Deal and to prefer to try to ward off the recession by the Keynesian methods endorsed by Mr. Keyserling.

Congress Adjourns

Congress has at last gone home. It has put more than thirty-five million words into the *Congressional Record* and has passed more than a thousand Bills, two-thirds of which the President has already signed. It has given President Truman most of the powers and the money he wanted for his foreign policy, an increase in the national minimum wage and the beginnings of a housing programme. But it has blocked the most important measures of the Fair Deal. The Taft-Hartley Act has not been repealed nor has the civil rights programme made any headway. Pro-

posals for a national health service, Federal aid to education, for more river valley authorities on the model of T.V.A., and the Brannan farm policy were all temporarily squashed. But Mr. Truman has been checked, not routed. He still retains the initiative, and he has three years to go. He has come out of his struggle with the men on Capitol Hill with credit, if not yet with the spoils he sought. This Congress has not been a good one, but it has been slightly better than its Republican predecessor. With next November's elections looming ahead, the President's strategy will be once again to make support for liberal policies the test, and hope that his friends in Congress will be reinforced by an electorate that wants the Fair Deal, rather than the stiff deflation desired by Dr. Nourse and the Republicans.

PARLIAMENT: A Little Surgery

Wednesday.

The Tories were stoically prepared for cuts, and still more cuts, till it hurt someone else. With this prospect, they composed themselves in their crowded stalls last Monday, waiting for the Prime Minister to make the blood flow. At the Bar of the House, Macmillan had the contented air of a *voyeur*.

Socialist back-benchers were uneasy, yet not acutely anxious. They knew that the Front Bench wanted to keep the social services and to build houses as much as they did themselves. Looking at the pack of Ministers and Junior Ministers, all of whom already knew the cuts but seemed no more flustered than usual, they decided that the economies would be drastic but not intolerable.

The Prime Minister got off to a cheer. As he hurried through his opening statistics, Members strained forward to look for familiar landmarks. They soon found one. When Mr. Attlee mentioned the housing cuts, Labour Members groaned despite themselves, and a duet said, "Shame." The Tories by now were accompanying the sad story with chuckles. These became loud laughter when the Prime Minister referred to anything like the Profits Tax or reductions of building for sale in the interest of building to let. They were disappointed. They thought the Prime Minister was going to fight the working class.

Only at one point was there general amusement. In the middle of the concise, White Paper sentences, the Prime Minister suddenly spoke of the Government's decision to remove certain "refinements of control." Was it the genteel euphemism that interrupted the attention? Or was it that the phrase was modelled on the more familiar "refinements of torture"?

In the whole statement the Tories savoured most the absence of new taxation, and gloated most at what they considered the Minister of Health's discomfiture over the shilling prescription charge. "Where is he?" they shouted when it was announced. With their customary myopia (as Bevan himself might say), they failed to see him right in front of them.

The Tory vendetta against Bevan is more safely conducted at long range through the Press and on private platforms than in the House. His temperament does not accord well with the attitude that the Tories like to adopt towards Labour Ministers since, as he said in the debate on the National Health Service (Amendments) Bill, "I am the very last person to be bullied." He also has a lacerating vocabulary that habitually reduces the Tories to chastened attention. What, after all, could so experienced a debater as Walter Elliot, or anyone else for that matter, reply to his command, "Don't be so jejune!"

The debate on the Health Bill, better than any other, illustrated the difference in outlook of Labour and Tory Members to the nation's troubles. Lucas-Tooth accused John Baird, a dentist, who had made a well-justified criticism of some dentists for financial rapacity, of fouling his own nest. Undisturbed, Baird said that he represented his constituents, not the dental profession. The Tories jeered and snarled. The man had no team spirit. It was left to Bevan to establish that, the more the Tories defended a sectional interest against the public interest, as was their habit, the stickier became their "moral morass."

MAURICE EDELMAN

THE MIXTURE AS BEFORE

THE politicians on both sides of the House will be chiefly concerned to consider whether the Government, by its programme of economy cuts, has improved or worsened its chances in the 1950 election. The Labour Movement has observed that little is being done by the Government to offset the impact of devaluation and Departmental retrenchment on working-class incomes. These and kindred problems, which formed the background anxieties behind this week's Parliamentary debate, are discussed briefly on an earlier page. From the strictly economic point of view, these issues are all subsidiary to one central question. Do the cuts form part of a coherent policy for reaching a long-run solution of the problem of the balance of foreign payments and the prevention, in the short run, of a recurrence of the drain on our gold reserves which led, this summer, to devaluation?

A distinction must clearly be drawn between the proposals for achieving directly a closer approach to equilibrium in the foreign payments account and those which can be classified as measures deriving from devaluation and the general decision that a higher proportion of British production must be exported. So far as the immediate payments gap is concerned, Mr. Attlee added little to what had already been foreshadowed by Sir Stafford Cripps at the beginning of July. Imports from the dollar area are to be reduced by 25 per cent., a saving of $400 millions; but this cut, we are told, is not to operate, at any rate in full, until next year. Meanwhile, will devaluation prove sufficient to arrest the drain on gold reserves? In the long run, the Government appears to rely on our ability both to produce more and to sell more in the dollar area. Whether this can be achieved in time to prevent our greatly diminished reserves of gold and dollars falling to a point at which they are incapable of meeting the needs of the whole sterling area remains to be seen. We should have felt happier if Mr. Attlee had shown some realisation of the fact that reliance on increased dollar earnings is a precarious gamble; that cutting dollar imports is by itself an impoverishing process unless alternative supplies of food and raw materials can be obtained from countries more ready than the United States to take our manufactured goods; and that it may be necessary both to curtail our present rate of unrequited exports to our sterling creditors and also to restrict, within the sterling area, movements of capital which find, at present, escape routes through its fringes.

When we turn to the internal measures proposed, the real test to be applied is whether they are calculated to secure one or both of two objectives—greater effort on the part of entrepreneur and worker, and retention of the reduction in British prices which, so far as hard currency countries are concerned, has been brought about by devaluation of the pound. In other words, will the programme make it easier or more difficult to prolong the present wage-freeze? From the capitalist camp the answer will be an emphatic negative. Even if the plans which Mr. Attlee sketchily outlined are made fully effective—and we have yet to see whether next year's Estimates will in fact show a net reduction, as promised, of £130 millions—the Government's Tory critics, voicing the views of the City and the big industrialists, will undoubtedly argue that a reduction of 7 per cent. in the capital investment programme and of barely 3 per cent. in current budgetary expenditure will be insufficient to restore what the *Economist* has described as "the dynamism of the British economy." By this is meant the creation of a moderate pool of unemployment to act as a brake on claims for wage advances and to impart what is euphemistically called "flexibility" to our industrial structure.

Since the real aim of these critics of the Government is to produce in Britain a low-cost economy at the expense of wages and social services, Mr. Attlee has done well to turn a deaf ear to their insidious arguments. Electoral considerations apart, no course would have been more likely to lead to the wreckage of Britain's hopes of recovery in a turmoil of industrial disputes than a decision to re-enact the 1931 deflation at the cost of unemployment and the virtual demolition of the Welfare State. What the Government has in fact done is to prescribe a new dose of "the mixture as before"; it reverts to the degree of "disinflation" which the Chancellor held, in his last budget, to be desirable, but which recent and forthcoming Supplementary Estimates threaten to impair. Obviously devaluation, coupled with a still more intensive export drive, holds inflationary dangers. If some imported goods are dearer, as they must be, and if supplies of home-produced articles reaching the shops are curtailed, a situation might easily arise in which too much money would be chasing too few goods. To the extent that some of the proposed economies—the £50 millions knocked directly or indirectly off food subsidies, the new charge for medical prescriptions and the raising of the price for school meals—diminish mass spending power, they will do something to restrain the inflationary trend, provided there is no substantial increase in cash wages.

That, in fact, is the rub. If the Cabinet has (rightly, as we think) declined to give the entrepreneur an added incentive by the promise of tax remissions, it must also be recognised that by steepening the rise (which must in any case have resulted from devaluation) in the cost of living, the programme will make it more difficult to restrain the Trade Unions from pressing demands for wage increases, at any rate for the low-paid workers. The Government is entitled to say to its working-class supporters: "Even if your real wages temporarily fall—and this can be made good by increased production—we have at least substantially preserved for you the benefits of the great social services, and we are still spending on a large scale to stabilise the cost of basic foods." Will this argument prevail against the patent fact that wage-packets buy less and that the pinch will soon begin to be felt in the housewife's shopping basket?

The Government, in short, have staked heavily on an economic gamble. Britain, as a Welfare State, is to "stand on its own feet" in a still predominantly capitalist world; and this aim is to be achieved by appealing to the patriotism and self-restraint of the worker and entrepreneur alike. Both are asked to shoulder the immense burdens not merely of social services but of Imperial Defence commitments and, to some extent, the financing of the import needs of the whole sterling area. Can this be done without much greater inroads into luxury expenditure now made possible by drafts on capital, and without many tighter economic controls? Or, if we are not to move much nearer to "total" planning, may not more of the load of Defence commitments have to be jettisoned? The Government have challenged themselves and their democratic convictions.

DISSENT AND REVOLUTION

THE trial of the eleven Communist leaders has ended in prison sentences. They were found guilty, after the longest criminal trial in American history, of conspiring to overthrow the Government by force or violence. It is now for the higher courts to decide whether the verdict should be sustained. This is a crucial decision, in which more than the personal fate of the defendants is at stake. For, in reviewing the case, the appeal courts must face the old dilemmas of toleration and dissent. If they uphold the convictions, the Communist Party will almost certainly be disrupted and driven underground. There will be no need for the American Government to embark on the risky course of banning it outright. This the Supreme Court might feel bound to reject as an unconstitutional Bill of Attainder.

This gives the case a special importance. It is the first in which the entire leadership of a party has been indicted and the first, also, in which the position of the Communist Party has been clearly challenged by the Attorney-General. Communists and other radicals have been sent to prison before or have been freed by the Supreme Court on appeal. But the Court has always avoided ruling upon the purposes and character of the Communist Party. In the famous Scheiderman case, for instance, the Government sought to deport an alien on the grounds that his membership of the Communist Party committed him to the forceful overthrow of the American Government. The Court squashed the deportation order without any discussion of the philosophy and intentions of the Communist Party. Similarly, individual judgments have been handed down on persons sentenced for contempt of Congress or violation of laws against criminal syndicalism. But with the passage of the Aliens Registration Act in 1940, the situation changed. Under this Act, it became an offence "knowingly and willingly" to "advocate the overthrow of the Government by force or violence." A number of Trotskyists were sentenced to prison on this charge a few years ago, but the Supreme Court refused to hear argument on their case. There has not been, therefore, any clear and final test of whether this Act (commonly referred to as the Smith Act) violates the constitutional guarantees of free speech.

There are two distinct issues in this case. The first is whether the American Communists were conspiring to lead a violent revolution. This is a question of fact, on which the jury found against them. The second is more important. Even if their ultimate objective is revolution, do they have a legal right to advocate it? This is a question of law.

Now the specific offence for which these Communists were tried dates from their 1945 reorganisation, when they repudiated the reformist policies of Earl Browder. It was never suggested, in the course of the trial, that they contemplated an immediate and Blanquist coup. That would have been ludicrous. But the prosecution argued that they would overthrow the Government if the chance arose. To this end, they used pseudonyms, maintained a network of secret training schools and educated their members in the principles and techniques of revolution. To this the defendants replied that secrecy was necessary to protect Communists from victimisation, that they believed in legal methods of political change, and that they had always insisted that the danger of unlawful violence came from the Right. They were much handicapped, obviously, by the revolutionary record of other Communist parties and by the prosecution's insistence that they were not free agents, being subject in the last resort to orders from outside. And it was utopian for Judge Medina to ask the jury, as he did, to put aside its preconceived opinions and prejudices about Communism. The purpose of the Attorney-General, in initiating this case, was not to forestall an insurrection, but to do the maximum damage to the American Communist Party, by removing its leaders, by running it into huge legal expenses, by discrediting it and, by making an example of the defendants, to scare away the weaker comrades. The United States does not fear revolt: it fears what the Communists might do, come depression or war.

But is it legitimate to convict and imprison these Communists for conspiracy, in the absence of any overt revolutionary act? The difficulty, of course, is an old one. By the time a conspiracy moves from advocacy to action, it may be too late. Judge Medina emphasised this point in his charge to the jury, arguing that the State may act before the danger becomes immediate. If an evil conspiracy exists, he suggested, which might threaten society "at the earliest time that circumstances would permit," Congress is justified in limiting freedom of speech, for "words may be the instruments by which crimes are committed." This constitutional doctrine has yet to be sustained. How does it square with the American precedents?

As in all countries conceived in revolution, there is a strong tradition of dissent in the United States. It could, in fact, be argued that there is a right to revolution. Thomas Jefferson certainly conceded it when he wrote:

> God forbid we should ever be twenty years without such a rebellion . . . What signify a few lives lost in a century or two? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants.

Abraham Lincoln made the same point when he insisted that

> . . . if ever the people should grow weary of their existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember and overthrow it.

Such ideas follow inevitably from the Declaration of Independence, though Jefferson was a rare and rational revolutionary in justifying subsequent revolutions against the regime he himself had helped to establish. But there can be little doubt that one theme in the American political tradition admits that men have as much right to alter or abolish governments as to institute them.

There is, however, a paradox here. For American constitutional law recognises dissent but not dissent carried to the point of revolution. The State, representing the majority, is entitled to protect itself. It may deny liberty to a minority which seriously threatens its security. This is the doctrine laid down by Justice Holmes thirty years ago. The question, he wrote, "is whether the words used are in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent." If there is such a danger, then the State may legitimately act. A few years later, in the Gitlow case, which has certain similarities with the present Communist trial, he returned to the same point. Gitlow, at that time a leading Communist, had advocated a proletarian revolution and dictatorship. Holmes, opposing his conviction, in one of those dissents that matter more than judgments, argued that there was "no present danger of an attempt to overthrow the Government by force," and that Gitlow's words "had no chance of starting a present conflagration." And as recently as May this year, the Supreme Court held that "free speech cannot be abridged unless the clear and present danger rises far above public inconvenience, annoyance or unrest."

Can this test be applied to the Communists' case? Even if it is true, though they deny it, that they advocate revolution, it is also necessary to prove that they are strong enough or that conditions are such as to create an immediate danger. Otherwise they must be acquitted, however unpleasant or unpatriotic their ideas may seem to other Americans.

There is more to the case, however, than this. It raises the whole problem of citizenship and loyalty. Every sincere democrat would agree that, in a tyranny, where legal opposition is impossible, insurrection becomes a moral duty. No one could have moral scruples about supporting the anti-Fascists in Nazi Germany. But what of the converse argument? Should a democracy permit liberty to the enemies of liberty? At this point, the debate must shift from the plane of legal idealism to that of value judgments. The Communist demands civil liberties for himself and would deny them, without any sense of inconsistency, to a Fascist, for he believes his objectives to be good as the aims of Fascism are evil and socially retrograde. A democracy attempts to steer a middle course. But, in the end, if the danger is clear and present, it will resort to coercion. In a struggle for power, force is a stronger argument than reason.

This is the real dilemma of the liberal. He can permit dissent up to the point of danger. But how can he decide when that point is reached? In a period of crisis and hysteria, it is easy to make serious errors of judgment. Or he can admit the right of unqualified dissent, in which case he may easily be giving the enemies of democracy the opportunity to destroy it. In either case, if he makes mistakes, their price may be enormous. His special problem, in the case of the Communists, is that he may not classify conspiracy to overthrow the Government by violence as a category of dissent, such as pacifism or membership of Jehovah's Witnesses. It is very difficult to distinguish between "abstract" advocacy of revolution and actual conspiracy.

Yet liberty cannot be saved by the timid. It is worth some calculated risks. For it is both easier and more tempting to suppress than to tolerate. We can at least accept the doctrine of Justice Holmes, even if we lack, in an age which has cynically abandoned optimistic rationalism, the rash courage of Jefferson, who wished that revolutionaries might "stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it." The United States has not left the Communists undisturbed. On the contrary, this trial is the culminating event in the anti-Communist campaign. But no proof has yet been produced that the policy or the behaviour of the Communist Party, though Americans may find both obnoxious and inconvenient, offer an immediate threat. Espionage is another matter. But the defendants were not charged with espionage. They are to be imprisoned for what the American Government insists is their ultimate intention. On this reasoning, Jefferson would have to be repudiated. For he, after all, moved from revolutionary intentions to achievement.

POLICE IN THE EAST END

[We are authorised by the Home Secretary to publish the following correspondence between himself and the Editor of The New Statesman & Nation.]

DEAR KINGSLEY MARTIN,

My attention has been called to a letter signed "John Hadlow" and published in THE NEW STATESMAN & NATION on September 24 last, complaining of the conduct of the police "one recent Sunday" in Dalston Lane, Hackney.

I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that he has been in communication with you and has invited you to communicate with the writer of the letter and to ask him to call at Scotland Yard to give particulars of the incidents referred to in his letter with a view to further inquiries being made. I understand that the writer of the letter may feel some difficulty lest, if he accepted this invitation, he might prejudice his position as a reporter *vis-à-vis* Scotland Yard.

I am quite sure that you will agree that we cannot allow matters to rest where they are. Serious allegations have been made publicly against the conduct of the police on the occasion in question but, anxious as are the Commissioner and I myself to investigate these allegations, so far no information has been made available to us as to the time, date and place when these incidents are alleged to have occurred. Until it is, proper investigation of the complaints is not possible.

I take so serious a view of the matter that, if the necessary information is made available, an inquiry ought to be made into the specific allegations made by your correspondent. I hope, therefore, that you will immediately get in touch with your correspondent and ask him to supply to me, personally, information as to the time, date and place when the incidents which he describes in his letter are alleged to have taken place. I shall be glad to receive any other information as to these alleged incidents which he considers relevant. If your correspondent will supply this information and will be prepared to give evidence about the alleged incidents, I shall at once take steps to set up an independent judicial inquiry into the specific allegations which have been made.

After consultation with the Commissioner of Police I can give you a categorical assurance that your correspondent's position as a reporter *vis-à-vis* Scotland Yard will not be prejudiced. You will appreciate, however, that neither the Commissioner nor I can guarantee immunity from legal process taken by any police officer who believes that his official character has been traduced.

The Home Office, J. CHUTER EDE.
Whitehall.
18th October, 1949.

DEAR HOME SECRETARY,

I am glad to acknowledge your letter of October 18 in which you said that you are ready to set up a judicial committee to investigate allegations made in a letter published in this journal on September 24 as soon as you know the name of the writer and the time, date and place to which he refers.

Perhaps I should begin by briefly recording the circumstances of publication. Letters alleging that some of the police on duty in the East End show a strongly anti-semitic bias often reach me, only to be discarded because I know nothing of the writers. "John Hadlow's" letter was an exception; I felt it my duty to publish it because the writer, who enclosed his name and address, was known to be on the staff of one of the great national dailies and to have special experience of this kind of reporting. As to the allegations in the letter, I personally interviewed the writer who assured me that he had himself witnessed the incidents he described and had with him at the time a colleague who was equally indignant, and who was also willing to testify to his allegations. He also said that he was free from bias in the matter since he was neither a Jew nor a Communist and had, as his letter indicated, no general quarrel with the police, with whom, on the contrary, he worked regularly and in harmony.

You will, I am sure, agree with me that in thus attempting to check the bona fides of the writer of the letter I had done my editorial duty. An editor cannot, of course, vouch for the accuracy of all the statements in a letter he publishes; he can only satisfy himself of the general good faith and credibility of the writer.

Since hearing from you, I have several times seen the writer of the letter. He affirms that he stands by every word that he wrote, but I find to my great regret that he now feels it impossible to come forward. I conveyed to him the assurances I have received from you, Sir, and from the Commissioner of Police stating that he would run no risk of losing his police facilities from Scotland Yard by coming forward. I was, however, completely unable to convince him that such assurances—the sincerity and the authoritative nature of which he fully accepted—would in fact avail him if his name were divulged. His work and his value as a Fleet Street reporter—indeed his livelihood—depend, in his submission, on his capacity to maintain friendly and close relations with the police, and these he feels he will be completely unable to maintain if he is known to have made these allegations.

As I accepted an obligation to maintain his anonymity, I have no alternative but to send you my sincere regret that I am unable to comply with your request. KINGSLEY MARTIN

10 Great Turnstile. October 25

A LONDON DIARY

NOT for the first time the Beaverbrook press, searching for any device to damage the Government, has, in fact, done it a good turn Scare headlines about the return of clothes rationing and the terrible cuts that were coming upon us made Mr. Attlee's soporific broadcast a pleasant relief. If you are expecting to be severely punished—and have a feeling at the same time that it will do you a bit of good—it is agreeable only to be treated to a Sunday School piejaw. Mr. Attlee said that there were some good firms and some excellent ones, but regrettably there were some that were not good at all; if the bad ones could be brought to the level, not of the excellent ones but of the good ones, then everything would be beer and skittles. How far this moral, almost Baldwinian approach goes with the public to-day I don't know. But for a very large number of people it is preferable, I believe, to the lush elaboration of Churchillian rhetoric. Here, people say, is an honest man whom we can believe, even if he does sound a bit priggish. We have heard rather too much about blood, tears and sweat. There is something moving about a nursery appeal to be good children, to put away our toys and get on with our homework.

* * *

One conscientious member of Mr. Attlee's audience said: "But he never told us what to do! I feel as I did during the war that it is up to me to help. But nothing is produced but frustration if I am told that salvation depends on producing more, etc., when, in fact, production has gone up quite well and further improvement usually depends on factors outside the ordinary man's control." I made some inquiries about that and the results are very disconcerting. The Economic Survey only demanded as a target an increase in production of 2½ per cent. It was an obtainable target. For the first three-quarters of 1949 productivity has been increased by at least 5 per cent. and perhaps, experts tell me, by as much as 7 per cent. Workers who responded to the special campaign and are rightly very proud of achieving twice, or more than twice, their target figure are most resentful when the Minister of Transport makes a speech saying that the workers have "not played the game" since the war. Mr. Barnes may merely have had an off-day or an attack of toothache. But among the rank and file the word is certainly going round that the Government is trying to transfer to the workers the blame for its own defects.

* * *

The truth of the matter is that we are as a nation behaving as if nothing had happened since the Imperial days of 1900. Two out of every three of the dollars we have received in loans and Marshall Aid have gone on overseas commitments. We have actually received less than £1,500 million in all forms of aid and in the same period we have passed on £1,800 million to Unrra, "unrequited exports" (that is in repayment of war debts to Egypt, India and Pakistan), aid to Germany and other forms of Government overseas expenditure. The percentage of our national income spent on defence and foreign aid is the same as that of the United States, though we, unlike America, are bankrupt. The more I contemplate these figures the more I conclude, not that Mr. Attlee's cuts are too big or too small, but that they are largely irrelevant to the real crisis. We owe our trouble primarily to Mr. Bevin's belief that if we play the role of the great protecting Power and therefore save America from doing so in the Middle East and the Far East we shall always be able to get as much money as we need from the United States. I do not believe that this is true, and I should regard it as suicidal policy for Socialist Britain even if it were true.

* * *

Britain voted for Czechoslovakia in the elections to the Security Council; America for Yugoslavia. The Communists hold by definition that Britain can never take an independent line but must always follow the United States. So the fact that Soviet propaganda should not have emphasised this Anglo-American divergence is intelligible enough. What does surprise me is that British newspapers, even when they mentioned the British support of Czechoslovakia, did not discuss the reason. I suppose Mr. Bevin argued that, according to the spirit of the Uno Charter, Czechoslovakia was the proper candidate because she was the choice of the Eastern bloc. As the leading member of the Commonwealth bloc, we could not afford a dangerous precedent. After all, what should we do if Dr. Malan opted out of the Commonwealth, and Mr. Vyshinsky then proposed South Africa as the British Empire member? Those who have potential Titos do not throw stones!

* * *

In explanation of some of the appointments to the Labour Cabinets of 1924 and 1929 Mr. Sidney Webb used to say that Labour was like the older parties in having its "dukes," whose hereditary claims could not be overlooked. Just as it was once obligatory for Tory and Whig Cabinets to contain members of the Stanley and Cavendish families, so certain rich and powerful trade unions had a sort of prescriptive right to personal representation in Labour Governments. J. R Clynes was often regarded as one of these dukes, who had to be in a Labour Government irrespective of their abilities. I don't myself think this fair to him. Clynes was a level-headed and shrewd little man whose long experience of working-class politics made him a valuable adviser. His period at the Home Office was not, I think, marked by any great distinction, but he had the singular merit that in moments of crisis he took an independent and honourable line. It was usually assumed that he stood on the extreme Right of labour politics, but, in fact, he was found on some very critical occasions—notably in the General Strike and again in 1931—to be rather on the Left. The truth is that he genuinely belonged to the working class and was not muddled by the "aristocratic embrace." It is worth while too pointing out that Clynes began his career as a very poor

boy and that, during a lifetime of serving the workers, being an M.P. and eventually a Cabinet Minister, he remained poor and died poor.

* * *

Sir Harold Scott appeared to be talking excellent sense when he told the Royal Commission on Gambling that you could never stop street betting by legislation, and that the best solution was to legalise cash betting at premises licensed for the purpose. I wonder if anyone will dare to object to this proposal on the ground that it would put the poor man without a cheque-book on a level with the well-to-do who 'phone their bets to a bookie.

CRITIC

GOOD OUT OF EVIL

There has been some excessive resort to doctors for prescriptions. . . . A charge not exceeding one shilling will now be imposed. The Prime Minister, October 23rd.

Breathes there the man with soul so mean
He hogs nerve tonics and quinine,
Drugs, spectacles and vitamins,
Appliances and aspirins,
And hovers at the doctor's door
To grab the Mixture as before,
If such there be . . . but cut it short,
Of many such they make report,
Who, heedless of the general need,
Indulge in anti-social greed,
And, to the Government's distress,
Show despicable selfishness,
By making an excessive call
On services designed for all.

But mark how in the Welfare State,
Which aims to train and elevate.
The thoughtful Government prepares
A plan to guarantee fair shares,
And put those elements to shame
Who have not learned to play the game.
This whole remedial design
Involves for wrongdoers, a fine,
To others but a token fee
On State prescriptions, so far free.
By this device they turn abuse
To moral and material use,
For every shilling in the till
Brings grist to the Exchequer mill.
State thus proves that it permits
None to exploit its benefits,
While gaining in a single year,
An increase of ten million clear.
This shows, if rightly understood,
How evil may be turned to good.

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed. Paste entries on a POSTCARD.

The bishops stand outside party politics. Most bishops could be described as Liberal Conservatives, with strong Socialist leanings.—From *Birmingham Mail*. (Violet Tallis.)

Citizens should not be expected to place litter in receptacles while there are unemployed who would be willing to sweep litter from the streets.—Letter in *Liverpool Echo*. (Isabel M. P. Burns.)

But they will be more complete citizens when they leave the Army all the same. For in an army hut on Salisbury Plain they are taking their first lessons that will soon enable them to read the football results without the necessity of having to listen to them on the radio.—*The People*. (A. T. Robinson.)

A constable with a bandaged ear told the Clerkenwell, London, magistrate yesterday that when he made inquiries about a car in Southampton Row, W.C., a man who sat in it bit his ear. The man would not let go, and his teeth had to be forcibly removed.—*News of the World*. (I. Gerlin.)

THE FREE TERRITORY OF TRIESTE

TRIESTE has many attractions for the political observer. The city still looks and feels "Austrian"—much more so than any city of the German-Nationalist state now called Austria. On the coast, in the Yugoslav Zone, are palatial hotels, built as resorts for the officers of the Austro-Hungarian navy, and decaying ever since 1918. Now they are being brightened-up to provide the seaside holidays with which Tito keeps his army officers loyal. As well, Trieste has something of the air of Danzig between the wars. Just as the Germans paraded their superior civilisation against the Poles, so the Italians in Trieste win Anglo-American approval against the barbarous Yugoslavs. How tiresome that liberated peoples always behave so crudely, and that their oppressors have such good manners!

Zone A, which includes the port, the hills behind it, and the railway to Italy, is a parody of the American world. The shops are full of goods; the restaurants are full of food; enormous cars roar through the streets; Allied Military Government is housed in a modern palace of marble; and there are thirty thousand unemployed. Though a fifth of the population in Zone A is Slovene, the street-signs in the city are exclusively Italian. In the suburbs and villages Slovene is used; and Military Government has imposed Slovene schools on an unwilling civic authority. These are staffed by Yugoslav émigrés—Roman Catholics, Chetniks or collaborators. The port exports little; it flourishes by importing supplies for the armies in Austria and Southern Germany. Trieste gets its own share of Marshall Aid and, as well, collects a toll from all the Marshall Aid which passes through it. The frontier where I crossed into Yugoslavia was guarded on one side by a solitary Serb soldier, sulky and unfriendly; on the other side by a dozen Trieste police, extremely friendly and very handsome in their smart uniforms. The only one I spoke to who was not a former Blackshirt had served in the German navy. Though that had been "*ein gutes Leben*," he thought the Trieste police even more agreeable unemployment relief.

Zone B, which is run by the Yugoslavs, has a couple of fishing ports, a prosperous sardine-canning industry, and a good deal of rough farming, mostly vines. The population is one-third Italian, one-third Slovene, one-third Croat. Most middle-class Italians have left; and their week-end villas are now inhabited by Yugoslav officials or used as children's homes. On the other hand, the Italian workers tend to drift back to their old employments. Italian is in much more use in Capodistria (the Yugoslav centre of administration) than Slovene in Trieste. To balance the reactionary Slovene teachers in Zone A, the Italian schools in Zone B were staffed with Communists. The Italian Communists are now the strongest opponents of Tito and the most fervent advocates of the return of Trieste to Italy; hence the Italian teachers in Zone B are being weeded out, to the accompaniment of aggrieved wails about national persecution in Zone A. Real national persecution can be seen in the fact that not a single qualified teacher could be found among the half-million Slovenes and Croats liberated from Italian rule in 1945. There is now a teachers' training college in Porto Rosso (a rather decayed seaside resort), which will turn out the first native teachers of Zone B in 1950. Yugoslav Military Government has already built eight schools in Slovene villages which in Italy's day had no schools at all. For one who knew this district between the wars, it is also a pleasure to see that the names on tombstones have been laboriously put back into Slovene and Croat. I did not, however, observe any attempt to make the Italians of the coastal towns bury themselves under Slav names.

Yugoslav Military Government functions in Capodistria in a couple of rooms on top of the Yugoslav "Naafi." The Yugoslavs are busily stocking Zone B with clothes and shoes, so as to check the attractions of Zone A; this, no doubt, will start a rush of Yugoslav inhabitants into Zone B. Otherwise, apart from tins of sardines and excellent wines, Zone B is barren. It receives no Marshall Aid, has no rail connection with Yugoslavia except through Zone A, and even poor road connection. As a result, this isolated territory of one hundred thousand people is run like a little partisan republic—a belated fragment of the romantic days of 1944. Everything is improvised and done with an adventurous air.

Politically, too, Zone B is behind the times. Pictures of Stalin still share the place of honour with those of Tito; and there are slogans everywhere against the imperialists. When I asked who these were, I was told, "Why, the Anglo-Americans, of course!" In Yugoslavia itself Stalin has disappeared; and the slogans are directed against the Cominformists—even these now threaten to be out of date. Once the Yugoslavs arrive at straight slogans of national independence, it is going to be difficult for them to devise something which will appeal at all to the Italian minority in Zone B. This shadow of national cleavage makes the Italians apprehensive; and their anxiety is turned into hard facts by the time it reaches the black market of gossip in Zone A. All Western reports of what goes on in Zone B (except mine) are based entirely on this black market, which is as unreliable as any other.

Of course this partition of a territory already tiny is a nonsensical affair. The Yugoslavs have been manœuvred into a mistaken policy by their pride. When the Anglo-Americans acted in Zone A without consulting them, they acted in Zone B without consulting the Anglo-Americans. It is to the interest of Yugoslavia to preserve the Free Territory rather than let it return to Italy; instead they are being forced down a road which leads to partition between Yugoslavia and Italy, with Italy getting all that is of value. And in the meantime they have only slogans with which to compete with the flood of Marshall Aid. Anglo-American policy seems to be based on the assumption that the return of Zone A to Italy will appease Italian irredentism. Quite the contrary—it will only whet its appetite. Already Italian irredentist propaganda, counting Zone A as won, is demanding Zone B (hence the atrocity stories reminiscent of German technique); not content with this, it demands Pola, Fiume, Istria and the Julian March—in fact everything lost in 1945. If this, why not Ljubljana and all the Slovene lands which Italy incorporated between 1941 and 1943? Still, Italian irredentism, though noisy, is much less serious than German.

A sensible settlement is possible. Though I remain firmly convinced that on grounds of national justice Trieste ought to share the destiny of its hinterland and so belong to Yugoslavia, I recognise that this (apart from being opposed by all the great Powers) would now be an intolerable affront to Italian feeling and would provoke a real irredentism. On the other hand, including Zone A in Italy will be an intolerable affront to the Yugoslavs and, besides, will not solve Trieste's economic problems. The true solution, it seems to me, is a direct deal between Yugoslavia and the moderate elements in Italy in favour of some

scheme by which Italy and Yugoslavia should run the Free Territory jointly. At the moment no compromise is possible. Tito cannot make any concession for fear of being accused of yielding to the Western Powers; nor can he accept any advantage, for fear of being accused of taking bribes from them. Here, too, a direct deal with Italy has its advantages: the same accusations could not be made. These suggestions turn on the question whether any Italian statesman can be found who is prepared to treat the Yugoslavs as equals; and this I doubt—all history is against it. Yet at Ravenna, headquarters of irredentist propaganda for half a century, there is a memorial to over two hundred Italian partisans who died fighting the Germans in the cause of national independence. If the Italians would now shake themselves free of the Americans, as the Yugoslavs have shaken themselves free of the Russians, they could then settle the Trieste question between them.

In 1945, when I first concerned myself with Trieste, I was fool enough to think that the Great Powers would wish to co-operate and that Trieste might be a symbol of their co-operation. Instead, Trieste has become an outpost of American imperialism in Europe; and the Yugoslavs, who already have one imperialist Power on their hands, cannot be expected to cope single-handed with the Americans also. If the Italians are as proud and independent as they make themselves out to be, they will do their bit by getting the Americans out of Trieste and turning Trieste into the symbol of co-operation between Italy and Yugoslavia. But national independence can only be bought at a high price; and I fear that the Italians, rather than face the Yugoslav standard of life, would (like ourselves) prefer to live as America's pensioners. At any rate, there it all is in Zones A and B—the American way of life, the Russian (represented by the Italian Communist Party), the Yugoslav way of national independence, and the Anglo-Italian way of national out-relief.

A. J. P. TAYLOR

CULTURE OF EVESHAM

ANYONE who believes that State aid for agriculture is solving the rural problem should consider the contrast between the Vale of Evesham and the surrounding country. Growers of the Vale, who get little of such aid, are the most aggressively prosperous rural community in England. Clustered into the 20 square miles round Evesham there are 16 lively villages; beyond them, in the heavily subsidised mixed farming country, only one in three or four square miles, and that usually a small spiritless village deprived by enclosures of its economic *raison d'être*, by the Industrial Revolution of its local crafts, and whose school, if it has one, will probably have to be closed. It is the contrast between a community which has developed its own appropriate habitat and one which struggles on in the shell of an extinct civilisation.

Study of Evesham brings the rural problem into focus. Two things one notices at once: first, that the national importance of the horticultural production of the Vale has been built up by a co-operative peasantry living in compact village colonies; secondly, that the marketing of the produce is inefficient (which, however, does not warrant the conclusion that the middleman is chiefly at fault). For a closer view one can go down from the Cotswolds through Broadway, which is not itself a Vale village, but a foil to them. A few miles on, Badsey, within the Vale, has only a tiny core in the architectural style of Broadway. Its population, which has grown from 775 in 1901 to 1,400 in 1947, is housed in pink semi-detached houses; and it lacks the diversity of buildings which might give it character. There are no big houses, hardly any shops, few pubs or anything beside small-scale homes with water, gas and electricity laid on; for the rest there are buses to Evesham. But the householders of this undistinguished modern village are almost all growers, master gardeners, whose neo-medieval agricultural system is a document as important as unenclosed Laxton for economic historians and altogether more significant than the stones of Broadway.

The holdings are of a size convenient for intensive cultivation by the grower and his family, from two to 15 acres, and each holding is split into strips and plots widely scattered across open fields. The few regular and casual labourers there are fit into the family system. In difficulties, the grower will look to his neighbours to help him out; it is in the traditions of the Vale that such help should be freely given. For day-to-day work, as well as for emergencies, co-operative arrangements (especially the sharing of machinery and equipment) are an integral part of the system. Like Laxton, Badsey and its 15 counterparts are village agricultural units working the open fields. Even details are right: curving, half-furlong strips of growing crops; permanent, heritable tenant rights and a regional market in the valley town of Evesham.

But many of the Vale's curious mixture of qualities are not medieval. First, it is out of scale. Horticulture being several times more intensive than cereal growing, the villages cluster close together (which prevents a loss of balance between town and country). Second, the villages have no trace of medieval self-sufficiency. Their whole product is poured through the funnel of Evesham and they live by cash. Not only for their food but for most other services they look to their market centre. The unity of the Vale is stronger than the unity of its constituent villages. And third, the immutable seasonal rotation has gone. Glass and artificials have given the growers room to manoeuvre; they take their chances with "catch crops," and are good losers. They have a new divinity: the Market.

The colonies are in fact a 19th-century growth and bear the marks of their origin. The pattern of medieval agriculture had been thoroughly effaced before the modern one began to take shape. The only surviving relics of pre-enclosure days were the "ridge and furrow" conformation of the arable fields, and the villages themselves which, because enclosures came late, and because the use of land remained relatively intense, and also because sources of water were not widespread, had resisted better than most the disintegrating force of the new rural economy. The persistence of horticulture did not imply any continuity of social organisation. Early in the 19th century it was not the old village peasantry but the new capitalist farmer who benefited from the urban taste for fruit and vegetables.

The origin of the peasant re-colonisation was probably the casual allotment of parcels of church land to enterprising villagers for spare-time gardening. It happened some time before the Gloucester–Birmingham railway, inaugurated in 1842, began to demonstrate its commercial possibilities farther down the Avon at Eckington and Bredon. Ten years later the railway came to Evesham itself, and the demand for small plots increased. There was still no economic pressure on farmers to satisfy it. During the '60s they parcelled out only a few fields for gardener tenants. But in the '70s, Canadian wheat and the Great Depression forced them to loosen their grip. Existing tenants increased their holdings and new ones came in. As no one could take on more than an acre or so at a time, the fields had to be split up and allocated by lot or agreement, and the hollows of the "ridge and furrow" undulations were brought back to their original use as boundaries and drainage lines. The colonists inevitably disputed their boundaries and quarrelled immemorial quarrels, but prosperity eased them over the initial stages.

The conditions under which the community grew marked it deeply with 19th-century characteristics: the propensity to chase quick profits, to specialise unreservedly, and to accept, as inevitable, dependence on an erratic produce market. Its neo-medievalism is also 19th century. It owes almost nothing to survivals: the chance ridge and furrow line, the concentration of homesteads in the village, perhaps even an unextinguished spark of peasant interest in the older orchards. Mainly it is the result of a fresh process of colonisation. It evolved much the same forms as the Saxon colonisation because the conditions were basically similar: ground had to be broken to new forms of cultivation and rendered fertile, each new piece of land becoming available had to be rationed out to all comers in proportion to their physical capacity and their scanty resources.

By 1930 the growers were in almost exclusive possession of the Vale and were not pushing farther afield; they had fully equipped themselves with main services and communications; population, some three times more dense than in the rest of rural Worcestershire, had stopped growing. The war has not changed the general picture except to deepen its colours a little: population is a little higher but unlikely to grow much more, cultivation a little more intensive still.

It is a difficult moment to pass. Static conditions will require the elimination of two economic weaknesses developed in the long period of expansion. The first is inflexibility due to specialisation and heavy investment. Mixed farming has been practically eliminated from the Vale and with it the possibility of a return to family subsistence in hard times. If a grower is not getting a fair price, he falls back on cash reserves, and when they run dry he must either cash out or go on to bankruptcy. His holding is too small, and he is too deeply involved financially, to escape this dilemma. It is easy to foresee enclosures re-exterminating the Vale peasantry if ever their funds fail. There is no way back. To diversify cultivation now would lower efficiency and require, not prevent, the consolidation of holdings into larger units. The way forward is to ensure that prices are fair, fair not only on an average over a long period but also from day to day.

The day-to-day instability of the market is the second weakness. Unevenness in the flow of supplies, their perishability, the distance they have to travel, and the unresponsiveness of retailers to the quantities offered, produce between them a violent alternation between glut and scarcity. The instability of the market is also partly due to a lack of public interest in the qualities and seasons of fruit and vegetables. The subject is not a point of sympathetic contact between grower and eater. The grower pushes his product into the marketing machine, takes his cash and goes home. The eater eats (if he does not relish) what he is given. The housewife looks no farther than her local greengrocer; she takes what she expects Providence has put out for her there; and the greengrocer passes on her unimaginative demands to the wholesaler. There is no intelligent reaction to the periodicity of production to

moderate the glut and scarcity it produces at the market centres.

There is also a less materialistic result. The name of Evesham lacks the sensuous associations of "Charente" or even of "Argenteuil." Its product is anonymous. Not even in the Vale itself, least of all in the Vale, is the taste of asparagus understood. Christendom, the medieval form of a wider than local unity, has been replaced by an automatic commercial nexus which unites but does not illuminate. Gastronomic geography would perhaps be a poor substitute for Christendom, but it has the sanction of a Christian precept: "By their fruits ye shall know them"; and "culture" and "taste" have their higher significance. Certainly the *pays* of France contribute something more than material sustenance in their perpetual harvest festival. Evesham lives the good life or very nearly does, but what is more, and generally ignored, it produces the ingredients of good living—and casts them carelessly on the waters.

G. P. WOODFORD

THE ADMIRALS MUTINY

MR. JOHNSON, the American Secretary of Defence, is an ambitious, hard-working man. Many think he aspires to be President. He is a lively extrovert, better equipped with pugnacity than tact. He came to Washington looking for Gordian knots to cut. Acting upon the recommendation of the majority of the Joint Chiefs of Staff this Spring, he peremptorily cancelled, on grounds of expense, the Navy's $180 million super-carrier. The civilian Secretary of the Navy felt he had not been given proper opportunity to be heard, and resigned.

This seemed to justify the Navy's worst fears. The hated rival of the Navy's carrier-based bombers was the Air Force B-36. It would be America's vehicle for the atom bomb. It is, in fact, an aerial giant, twice the size of its World War II counterparts. It has an inter-continental range, and can fly from Chicago to Moscow and back with a five-ton bomb load without refuelling.

A couple of extraordinary events next occurred. They showed the emotional state within the Navy and its feeling that it must take its case to the people over the "gag" of the Act unifying the three Services. The first was the circulation of an anonymous attack hinting that Air Force leaders had picked the "inadequate" B-36 because of corrupt business connections. The authorship of this was traced by a Congressional committee to a civilian employee in the Navy Department. He was fired after acknowledging that his charges were false.

Then came a touch of melodrama. On the evening of October 3rd, in a dark corridor of a downtown Washington office building, a reporter kept a mysterious rendezvous and was handed a secret memorandum filched from Navy Department files. It turned out to be a letter from one admiral, indorsed by two other top Navy men (including Admiral Denfield, the Navy's representative on the Joint Chiefs of Staff) and addressed to Navy Secretary Matthews. In effect it reaffirmed suspicion of the B-36 as a weapon, deplored the alleged subordination of the Navy to the Air Force, and declared that Navy morale had sunk "almost to despondency."

The person who gave this out was a Captain Crommelin of the Navy. He will certainly be court-martialled, but he is a willing martyr. For better or worse he obtained his objective, a full-fledged Congressional investigation and banner headlines. Hearings have revealed a degree of bad blood and suspicion between the Navy and Air Force which has shocked the public. One characteristic item is the revelation that the Air Force finally refused to let Naval observers inspect the improved B-36 on the ground that prejudiced statements regarding it were purposely given out to the press *à la* Captain Crommelin. The spectacle of America's highest-ranking Defence chiefs publicly disputing is unusual, to say the least, and details are being cabled round the world.

A word should be said about the setting of this hearing. The terrifying American habit of washing dirty linen not merely in public but under Hollywood floodlights frequently jars visitors. The fullest refinements of publicity surround this controversy. The set is the stuffy brilliance of the House Armed Services Committee—with crystal chandeliers, gilt picture frames, a double-deck dais for Committee members, a bank of motion picture and television cameras whirring on the side, the witnesses sitting below with spotlights burning on them through a haze of cigarette smoke and cameramen and reporters popping up everywhere.

At first glance the Committee procedure seems the worst that could be devised for rational decision. There is only a nightmare-like resemblance to standard judicial procedure, for this hearing is in fact not a court but an informal inquiry. Some of the Congressmen do not appear to know a sidearm from a gyroscope, and they strain to get in the range of cameras. Navy and Air Force spokesmen are accompanied by a score or so of uniformed junior officers who sit in the rear and act as claques with unrebuked applause. Chairman Vinson of Georgia himself deserves a word. He would make a good Lord Chancellor for a performance of the *Pirates of Penzance*. He is a small, corvine figure who looks supremely wise with his spectacles far down his nose, over which he characteristically peers.

When this is set down, however, it is the worst that can be said. What the visitor may not understand is that the loosely knit but strangely effective American governmental structure customarily operates in the full glare of publicity and operates as a kind of continual public mass meeting, a procedure which seems to thrive on controversy and recrimination. Nor can this system be disdainfully tossed aside. Whereas more sedate nations would bottle up a controversy like this as one too dangerous for the public to be let in on, there are actually issues involved of the citizens' relationship to the atomic world that can profitably be discussed. Even in the technical field of National Defence, where the voter can hardly be expected to have expert knowledge, something can be said for airing this bitter dispute.

The dispute tends to raise dimly sensed issues, the nation's strategy in Defence, its relationship to its foreign allies, and the ethical problem of using the bomb anyway—particularly now that Russia has got it. One real question is whether the proud days of surface fleets have been numbered by the atomic bomb. A suspicion that either this is true or that others think it true probably lies at the heart of the Navy's extraordinary sensitivity. A glancing reference was made to it by General Omar Bradley. As chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff he is the country's highest military figure. He is quiet and modest and looks like a schoolteacher. Two weeks of testimony by admirals and Marine Corps officers have thoroughly enraged him however. Called in rebuttal for the Army, he charged that the admirals were in "open rebellion" and that they had done "infinite harm" in promoting doubt and distrust regarding American defence strategy. Then, provoked into a counter-attack, he told the committee that the Bikini and Eniwetok A-bomb tests "revealed that the Navy afloat is one of the most profitable targets for an enemy with an atomic bomb and that its effect on ships is lasting."

The public has been calm, but the feeling of the man-in-the-street appears to be that the admirals must either justify more fully a position bordering on insubordination or take the consequences. There has been no concealment in the hearings of the fact that the one target of present U.S. military planning is Russia. It can be argued that the debate is deplorable in whipping up war fears.

But is the United States firmly committed to the idea of war's inevitability? Excerpts from the debates might imply this; but in fact, if America were firmly committed to the idea of war, this row between admirals and generals is about the last thing that could have occurred. America would heal the breach instantly in a real crisis. In fact the compelling reason for the row is that President and Congress decline to give the Services the money which each one thinks is essential, and the controversy is over how the money shall be divided. For the admirals it is a sort of mutiny on the taxpayers' bounty.

The Armed Services asked for a combined budget of $30 billions for this year and at one time had some hopes of getting it. Instead they are getting $16 billions, and it is one of the reasons of Mr. Johnson's extreme present unpopularity with the Forces that he is trying to reduce this to $14 billions for next year. He is doing this under President Truman's direction. America's record in the "cold war" may well be subject to criticism, but these facts should be taken into account.

The Battle of the Pentagon boils down to a question of emphasis. The Air Force and Army are willing to support the Navy in its task of guarding the coast, maintaining command of the sea, protecting transports and ferreting out submarines. They argue that long-range bombing, however, is not the Navy's job. The Navy in turn agrees that modern wars are still won by infantrymen, but charges the Air Force and Army with putting too much emphasis on land-based bombers.

Military tempers have boiled over in the hearings and, if this were a century ago, there would be a dozen duels fought every morning over in Rock Creek Park. General Eisenhower has been called in to throw his enormous prestige on the side of restored harmony and to get participants again on speaking terms. So far unification has produced disunity. The likelihood is, however, that unification will go on whether the admirals like it or not.

Washington. RICHARD STROUT

SO THEY SAY . . .

SELDOM has an illusion been so carefully built up as that fostered in the national press over the past few weeks of Mr. Attlee as a black-masked executioner raising a bigger and more fearsome "Geddes axe." Specimen *Daily Express* headlines of the previous week: TAXES UP?; "IT WILL HURT"; EVERY SPENDER TO BE CUT. The *Daily Mail*: AUSTERITY PLAN WILL BE "VERY SEVERE"; £550,000,000 AXE READY. *Sunday Chronicle*: "BLACK MONDAY" FEARS START RUSH ON SHOPS. The reality could hardly have failed to live up to that emotional press build-up. "Anti-climax" was not only, as the *Manchester Guardian* put it, "freely bandied about in the Lobbies," but over-worked in the headlines and editorials.

There were also, of course, one or two laboriously contrived metaphors. "The Man with the Axe has not come," said the *Daily Mail* (after reporting that the nation had been "braced,

tensed, keyed-up for heroic shocks"). "Instead we have the apprentice with the pruning hook." The *Daily Express* had its own version of this sentiment: "Terrible things we were led to expect . . . it was going to be tragic, cruel. . . . A big sharp axe? Not at all. A blunt penknife."

But although the Conservative papers in particular poured scorn on the inadequacy of what the *News Chronicle* called the "death by a thousand cuts," one of them, the *Daily Express*, could not resist a little woe. Under a typical *Express* headline (ATTLEE'S CURE—A SHILLING) it began its main story: "Mr. Attlee's financial cure . . . *may* put 175,000 people temporarily out of work. . . . BIG EFFECT NO. 2 *may* be dearer food. . . . BIG EFFECT NO. 3 *may* be dearer bus fares and transport charges. . . ." (My italics.)

The *Daily Graphic*, on the other hand, after hopefully suggesting that Attlee's statement "was regarded in some quarters as his swan-song," was equally sure that the cuts "will have little effect on the man in the street." Also prominent in the *Graphic's* front-page story was the following: "The savings are almost equal to the expected total of the Supplementary Estimates . . . so the Government rate of expenditure still stands [as before]." It did not, however, print the assurance on this very point that Mr. Churchill obtained from Mr. Attlee—that the £250 million would be a net reduction. But the *Graphic* did contain one whole-hearted tribute: that Mr. Attlee was to be "commended" for not taxing capital gains, restoring the excess profits tax, or increasing stamp duty. (The *Daily Telegraph* City editor similarly glimpsed the silver lining: 'MARKETS SHOULD BENEFIT FROM ECONOMY PLANS.')

The *Daily Telegraph*, incidentally, could not seem to achieve its usual single-minded accord with the *Daily Graphic*. Where the *Telegraph* considered that "clearly the Prime Minister realises how grave our position is," the *Graphic* was convinced that "the Government appeared to show no grasp of the seriousness of our economic plight," and while the *Telegraph* admitted that Mr. Attlee "had been trying to look at our problems in a national way, and not through the distorted spectacles of a Socialist quack," the *Graphic* clung to the belief that "the Government were more concerned with the impending general election than with putting our economic house in order."

The *Daily Mail* had its usual headline: TRADE UNIONS DON'T LIKE IT, and its usual "top trade union leaders" who were "displeased." It did not, however, quote Vincent Tewson, general secretary of the T.U.C., who (the *Daily Herald* was very happy to report) stated that "the trade union movement . . . will respond to the Prime Minister's appeal for a further increase in productivity and will back the Government in every practical way."

The *Herald*, completely unaware of any dissatisfaction in the ranks (*Daily Mirror*: "GREAT OPPORTUNITY MISSED," SAY LABOUR BACK-BENCHERS), found Mr. Attlee's broadcast "hard-hitting," and bravely admitted that "the economy cuts are serious. There is no denying that." "But it is immediately clear," continued the *Herald*, "that the Labour Government of 1949 has set its face resolutely against such panic remedies as were resorted to in 1931. There is no slashing of the social services. . . ." (*Daily Worker*: "These cuts far exceed the notorious 'economy' cuts . . . during the black year of 1931 . . . the Government . . . has savagely hacked at the social services. . . .")

Thus it was that there was no unanimity, even in disappointment. Even that notoriously fickle term "atmosphere," was used by two Conservative dailies to make opposing points.

Daily Telegraph :—

> Mr. Attlee had an attendance and an atmosphere in the House of Commons not usually attained more than two or three times in the lifetime of a Parliament . . .

The Times :—

> At no time was there generated the atmosphere of excitement generally associated with an important Parliamentary occasion. . . .

AUTOLYCUS

SPEIDEL'S STORY

ON the afternoon of July 17th, 1944, Allied fighter-bombers, discovering a lone German staff car travelling at full speed along the road of Livarot-Vimoutiers in France, poured the contents of their machine-guns into it and brought it to a standstill. They killed the driver and severely wounded his chief. What they did not know, and what even the Germans learned only three weeks later, after the abortive coup in Berlin and the Allied break-through at Avranches, was that they all but killed the redoubtable Rommel. What they could not know, and one learns only now from the revelations of Rommel's Chief of Staff, was that the Field-Marshal had not only, two days earlier, sent Hitler a powerfully worded memorandum demanding the immediate cessation of the war, but that he himself was carrying in his pocket a complete plan for the winding up of the war in the West, to be put into effect within the very next few days.

Would history have taken a different course, had Rommel not been knocked out three days before the Stauffenberg revolt? General Speidel, Rommel's Chief of Staff at Army Group B. and his closest confidant, thinks it would. In his remarkable study *Invasion 1944*, which has just been published in Germany, he insists that Rommel would have gone ahead with his plan even if Hitler, as had to be expected, refused to respond to the ultimatum. He is certain, moreover, that not even the failure of the revolt of July 20 would have deterred Rommel from making a single-handed attempt to put an end to the German disaster in the West, had he still been in command and not lying unconscious in a military hospital. When he woke up, it was all over.

The ramifications of the July plot among the high German army commanders in France have always remained somewhat obscure. General Speidel's account sheds much new light on them, and in particular clarifies Rommel's own part. Did Rommel at any time imagine he could beat, or even hold, Eisenhower? On his appointment (April 1, 1944) as Commander-in-Chief of Army Group B, whose task it was to repel the invasion, Rommel was asked by Hitler whether he thought such a large-scale offensive across the Channel at all likely. The question was not as naive as it sounds to-day; even a clear-headed man like Ernst Juenger, who was attached to Stuelpnagel's headquarters in Paris, notes in his war diary his surprise at the Allied landings. They seemed to him contrary to all Anglo-Saxon commonsense, since Germany and Russia were so successfully wiping each other out. Rommel was under no such illusion. He told the doubting Hitler that he and his Chief of Staff were convinced of the imminence of the invasion, and that it would decide the war. A fortnight later, on April 15, following a staff conference at his headquarters, Rommel made it clear to Speidel that in his view they had not a chance.

Hitler himself visited the front only once. This was on June 17th at Margival, and a memorable session it must have been. Hitler, "pale and weary from lack of sleep, toying nervously with his spectacles and coloured pencils," hardly listened to Rommel's report but "in a strange mixture of cynicism and wrong intuition kept talking endlessly about the V-weapon which was going to decide the war. The conference petered out into an irrelevant monologue," at the end of which Rommel, it seems, finally lost his temper. Protesting that the campaign was being directed from an armchair far behind the front, he exclaimed: "You are asking us to have confidence in you, but you yourself don't trust us!" Hitler turned even paler but said nothing. When an Allied air attack interrupted the conference, and sent the participants to the shelter, "Rommel used the opportunity to explain to Hitler with complete ruthlessness not only the military but also the political situation of Germany. He prophesied the collapse of the invasion front and the break-through into Germany which nothing could halt. He concluded with an urgent demand to terminate the war. After a brief exchange Hitler cut him short by retorting: 'Look after your invasion front, and don't bother about the continuation of the war!'" But by that time Rommel and his officers were already deeply enmeshed in the July 20th conspiracy.

Rommel's first contact with the conspirators dated back to February, 1944, when he met Dr. Stroelin, the mayor of Stuttgart, who was acting on behalf of Goerdeler. The "legal possibilities for a change of regime and the termination of the war" were then discussed. On April 14th Speidel met Stroelin at Freudenstadt and was asked to "convince Rommel that, for the sake of Germany and Europe, Hitler and his regime had to be eliminated." Simultaneously Generals Beck and Wagner made contact with Rommel from Berlin. Rommel needed no convincing, and immediately undertook to sound out his colleagues Falkenhausen, Stuelpnagel and Rundstedt. All three were sympathetic and promised active support, Stuelpnagel being the most enthusiastic and energetic, Rundstedt, as was to turn out, the weakest and least reliable. On May 15, at Mareil-Marly, Rommel and Stuelpnagel "agreed on detailed measures for a termination of the war and the abolition of the National-Socialist regime."

On this, as on other occasions, Rommel opposed the Berlin plan of assassinating Hitler, "whom he did not wish to see being turned into a martyr"; he wanted to arrest him with the help of one of his "reliable panzer units" and put him before a German court. On May 27, Speidel, on behalf of Rommel, saw Neurath, who wished to be included in the conspiracy. Neurath urged that swift action, before an Allied landing had taken place, was essential. "A solid front in the West was the prerequisite for all our plans." No agreement was reached as to whether Hitler should be assassinated or arrested, but both Neurath and Stroelin insisted that Rommel should assume supreme command and possibly even become temporary Head of State. Rommel agreed, and with Stuelpnagel worked out a plan of action.

On the Western front, six German military emissaries, including Stuelpnagel and Speidel, were to negotiate an armistice without Hitler's participation, offering the complete evacuation of the occupied territories in the West and the withdrawal of the German army behind the West Wall, and asking for the immediate cessation of Allied bombing of the German homeland. The armistice—not unconditional surrender—was to be followed by peace negotiations. On

the East front, the struggle was to be continued as a holding action along a shortened line.

Although Speidel himself believed that "the unconditional surrender formula was an obstacle which especially soldiers found difficult to assess psychologically," he insists that Rommel did not share his doubts. As late as July 15th "Rommel was under no illusion regarding the harshness of the peace conditions which had to be expected. But he placed his hope in a modest measure of statesmanlike insight, psychological intelligence, and political planning in Allied considerations. He never counted on Allied sympathy or similar sentiments. But he trusted the sober brains of the Great Powers."

In other words, Rommel did not expect the Western Allies to rebuff him; he was convinced that his "friend" Montgomery would give him his armistice and separate peace. He had no doubt that he could master the internal situation; but he sensed an air of dilettantism among the Berlin plotters and insisted on thorough preparation. In particular, it seemed to him, the decisive question of what was to be done with Hitler "was being discussed by too many different groups at once," and without co-ordination. Before the decisive stroke, he planned to have one more interview with Hitler and present him with an ultimatum.

The conspirators were not ready when the Allies landed on June 6, and Rommel himself, on his way back fom Berchtesgarden, was not even in his headquarters. From the very start, Rommel had not the slightest doubt about the outcome; he saw Hitler again on June 28, but again Hitler only talked about his "wonder weapons" and "lost himself in his own brain-vapours." Two days later, Rundstedt was dismissed and Kluge took his place as Commander-in-Chief, Western front; a large hole had been torn into the conspirators' web. Kluge appeared "as Hitler's spokesman talking in the Berchtesgaden style." He told Rommel in front of all his officers: "You too, Field-Marshal Rommel, will have to obey unconditionally from now on. Mark my words!" A few days later a formal reconciliation took place in which Kluge apologised to Rommel, but the new C.-in-C. remained a highly uncertain factor.

On July 9th the Berlin conspirators sent Lt.-Col. von Hofacker, a cousin of Stauffenberg, for a final conference. Hofacker asked Rommel how much longer the invasion front could hold; this was of overriding importance for the Berlin decisions. Rommel answered: "Maximum a fortnight to three weeks. After that we must reckon with a break-through. We have nothing with which to oppose it. "Hofacker was to report back to Rommel on July 15th.

On July 12th Rommel boldly took Kluge into his confidence. "Kluge at first merely listened, but later in the main approved Rommel's ideas. He made his own personal decision dependant on the result of a last and final inquiry among the divisional commanders." Rommel thereupon asked Stuelpnagel to make it clear to Kluge that he, Rommel, would go ahead in any case and irrespective of Kluge's participation. During the next three days he made the round of the divisional commanders at the front. Even S.S. General Sepp Dietrich now offered to co-operate. Back at his headquarters, on the night of July 15th, Rommel teleprinted his ultimatum direct to Berchtesgaden, and Kluge endorsed it. It was three typescript pages long and probably the only ultimatum ever addressed to Hitler by anyone inside Germany.

> The situation at the Normandy front, it said, is becoming daily more difficult. A severe crisis is approaching. Enemy pressure is increasing steadily. It must be assumed that the enemy will succeed, within the next fortnight or three weeks, in breaking through, and advance across France. The consequences will be immeasurable. The unequal struggle is nearing its close. I must therefore ask you to draw without further delay the *political* conclusions from this situation. As Commander-in-Chief of Army Group B I feel it my duty to state this with the utmost clarity.

Having despatched the message, Rommel said to Speidel: "Now I've given him his last chance. If he doesn't take the consequences we shall act." Upon receipt of alarming news from the Caen sector he dashed off to the front on the morning of July 17th; on his way back that same afternoon fate caught up with him.

The rest is known. Kluge himself took over command of Army Group B. Liaison between him and the Berlin plotters broke down, and the Stauffenberg bomb exploded without the fellow conspirators in the West having been notified of the date. Nevertheless, Speidel thinks, Rommel would have acted. But Kluge, although he had been in touch with Goerdeler since 1943, and although on the evening of July 20th Stuelpnagel and Hofacker urged him to act "despite the failure of the attempt," could not "bring himself to set off the revolt of the Western Front." Stuelpnagel, Hofacker and many others were caught and executed, and in the end Kluge took his own life. Speidel seems to have remained undetected until September 5th, when he was recalled.

Speidel leaves no doubt that Rommel was murdered by Hitler. When he saw him on September 6th on his way home, and they discussed the events of July 20th, Rommel said: "Now this pathological liar has gone completely mad, and the end is not yet." On October 7th he was summoned to Berchtesgaden, but his doctors refused to permit the journey. On October 13th he visited his friend and neighbour, Lt.-Col. Farny, and told him: "I'm in serious danger. Hitler is after me. You will see, he will assassinate me. Should anything happen to me, you must never believe that I committed suicide." The following day Generals Burgdorf and Maisel arrived from Berchtesgaden, and after a brief talk with them Rommel told his wife: "Within the next quarter hour I shall be dead. Hitler has given me the alternative of taking poison or being put before a People's Court." He left the house accompanied by the two officers, and after a short ride in their car, which was driven by an S.S. man, they handed him in dead at the Ulm military hospital. Forbidding an autopsy, Gen. Burgdorf told the chief surgeon, Dr. Mayer:

"Don't touch the body; it's all been settled from Berlin."

PETER DE MENDELSSOHN

BIG EARS

As soon as we got to Mont Louis we noticed something odd, but couldn't decide just what. Only by elimination—the people were quite normal, the cats, the horses—did we conclude that it was the dogs.

And even there, at first glance, everything was in order. There were all sorts of dogs, nearly all mongrels; big dogs, little dogs, excitable dogs, lazy dogs, friendly dogs, surly dogs, clean dogs, and dirty dogs. Just as in any small town. Then we sensed that all the dogs had a certain air, an expression of distrust, of remoteness; especially when they were off their guard, didn't know you were looking at them. But what gave them this air? We realised it suddenly: their big, drooping ears.

In the Café de France, a tipsy parachutist, one of the *bataillon de choc* quartered in the Citadel, and still wearing his English red beret of wartime, gave us the clue. "Get out!" he cried to an affection-seeking mongrel, 'Get out, son of a collaboratress!" Odd abuse, even in the land of purple dogs and camels. We mentioned the incident in the *pension* next day.

"Yes, it's true," they said. "What can we do? Everyone, alas, notices it sooner or later." By tactful digging, we got the facts. From 1942 to 1944, Mont Louis was the base of the German frontier police. To stop Allied airmen and detected Resistance people from getting over the Pyrenees, they used scout cars, searchlights . . . and bloodhounds. At the liberation, the bloodhounds were exterminated. But it was too late. Every bitch in the town had collaborated.

We sympathised deeply with the people of Mont Louis, but we had to agree; nothing can be done. You can dance and make speeches on the Fourteenth of July, you can give scholarships to Resistance orphans, you can name the main street after a Resistance martyr. All this has been done. But how can you forget the Occupation, when at every corner you meet those big ears?

At first, when it was a matter of little puppies frisking about, their absurd ears catching under their feet, you could laugh. But this is 1949; the tainted generation is full-grown. The dogs are bold, shameless. Every now and then, there is an incident. Someone coming home late gets a sudden, treacherous bite. A camper in the frontier mountains hears a deep, savage baying. The good people shake their heads: blood will tell . . .

The schoolmaster went into the question, with textbooks on genetics. A dominant characteristic, he found, may last for generations. It may skip a generation, when it had been thought to have vanished. A cheerful, popular terrier mates with a respectable poodle, each of them having the most impeccable short, pointed ears; and, in the first litter, a pup confronts its astonished parents, innocence in its baby eyes, guilt in its big ears. The priest was no more consoling. We cannot escape the Word of God: the sins of the fathers . . .

There were those who, showing their scars, demanded that all the dogs should be killed. But very few people in the town liked the idea. For one thing, most people are dog-owners. Principles are one thing, all right; but to load up your gun, lie to the children, take out your dog, avoid his gaze, and shoot him, just because he has big ears . . . if that's your idea, you begin. Maybe after all he'll take after his mother. You can't condemn them all. It's racialism. We're not Nazis, after all.

On the other hand, nobody had much faith in re-education. You can train a dog, yes. But you can't train him to be ashamed of his ears. Put yourself in his place: would you like to be told that it's wrong to have long eye-lashes?

The devil of it is that nobody can really trust his own dog. A man will swear black and blue that his dog is clean, affectionate, intelligent, loyal. Then he looks at those big ears. How can one be sure? A bloodhound is a bloodhound.

Various ways were suggested of getting rid of the dogs. A fund was started to send them to Germany, but it flopped. Some people presented their dogs to holiday-makers from Algeria, where dogs aren't understood or liked, and nobody would be sensitive to the big ears. Then the argument was heard: if they're bloodhounds, all right, let them be used as bloodhounds. The Toulouse *Front National* alleged that the army was using bloodhounds in Indo-China. But the military authorities said no, it was a lie, and anyway they wouldn't take the dogs as a gift; what is the army, a home for mongrel strays, *quoi?*

The C.R.S., now—the Republican Companies of Security. The miners called them the S.S., during the strike. But they aren't proper S.S.; for one thing, they haven't got bloodhounds. Would they take the dogs of Mont Louis? But there are several snags. It might become known, and the C.G.T. would get the wrong idea; Mont

Louis, a town where they breed scabs; no, impossible. And Jules Moch, from his point of view, would he be grateful? Our dogs aren't hundred per cent. bloodhounds. They might not prove reliable. In a crisis, they would remember their poodle mothers.

So, by now, most people in Mont Louis have resigned themselves to the big ears. The even joke about it; a bit uncertainly, perhaps. It doesn't worry you for weeks, and then one day you see the son of a collaboratress lifting his leg to insult the monument to the martyrs of the Resistance.

An awkward situation. MERVYN JONES

THEME FROM PROPERTIUS

(I, XXI : XXII, lines 5 to 8)

" You, hurrying wounded lest you share the fall
Of half our troop at the Etruscan wall,
What, do my moans twist back your bloodshot eyes?
Here an old comrade of your battles dies ! "

(Then civil discord drove with rankling goad.
Etrurian dust, I cry my rage aloud
At limbs cast loose upon you like a load,
No shred of earth the wretched bones to shroud !)

" Save yourself, soldier ! May your parents bless
Luck ; but grip tears back, lest your sister guess
Gallus through Caesar's swords could burst his way
But not escape from baser hands to-day :

Else, wandering on these hills, she may divine,
Stumbling on scattered bones, that some are mine!"

G. S. FRASER

The Arts and Entertainment

THE OLD VIC MADE NEW

LOVERS of the Old Vic can look forward to a year which will wipe away the memory of recent disappointments. Mr. Hugh Hunt, the new Director, and Mr. Llewellyn Rees, the Administrator, have brought together a company of players, accomplished or promising, who already act as a well-disciplined team. The season opened with Hugh Hunt's magnificent production of *Love's Labour's Lost*, followed by Michael Benthall's enthusiastic if uneven attempt at *She Stoops to Conquer*. They have made a splendid start; we hope they will avoid that generous or politic eclecticism (so often found in modest artists and able organisers) that may let in producers whose practice and theory contradict the principles on which this excellent company has been selected. We do not want the smart, the clever-clever, the half-educated, the show-off : we want what we are given in *Love's Labour's Lost*, the *author's* play, a theatrical experience created by the words the author wrote, words which are the only justification for designers' sets, actors' characterisation, and producers' interpretation.

By reading Shakespeare's text intelligently (and by not thinking he needs helping out by some half-baked association with some musician or painter of some other period) Hugh Hunt refutes those many scholars and critics who have condescended to this early comedy : he reveals not an outmoded private joke, fit only for donnish crossword diligence or undergraduate-producer exhibitionism, but a witty, satiric, hilarious, well-shaped, warm, exciting, human piece of theatre. He feels the emotion beneath the surface snip-snap of wit ; he understands the uneasy melancholy that animates the gay tapestry figures of the pastoral. Consequently he lays off the " fantastication," and allows his players to create credible human beings.

When Navarre (Michael Aldridge) and his courtiers, Berowne (Michael Redgrave), Longaville (Gordon Whiting), and Dumaine (Nigel Stock) vow for three years " not to see ladies, study, fast, not sleep," we do not bother about Elizabethan allusions, but glory in their youth, enthusiasm, and imminent downfall. When the Princess of France (deftly, if too lightly, taken by Angela Baddeley) and her entourage set up their tents, helped by Walter Hudd's dexterous, honey-tongued Boyet, they captivate us at once. As each courtier succumbs, exchanging learned book for love-letter, and the plot dances along through hunts, masques, impersonations, and mistaken identities, the dewy parkland setting of Berkeley Sutcliffe, superbly painted by Alick Johnstone, and the music composed and arranged by Herbert Menges, sustain an atmosphere in which country pleasures and courtly artifice are perfectly combined : though the gorgeous clothes, recalling the miniatures of Nicholas Hilliard, seem not altogether conveniently designed for wearing ; especially the women's. If the young men suggest Redbrick rather than a courtly academe, and the ladies lack something in nobility and style, the deficiency is more than made up by their naturalness, high spirits, and attack, and in the case of the men by exceptional acting talent. The young ladies are somewhat o'erparted, and Diana Churchill in a determined attempt to make up as the Dark Lady succeeds only in incommoding herself and reminding us of " those two pitchballs stuck in her face for eyes."

Michael Redgrave fully convinces us of Berowne's intelligence, wit, and charm, but he will not leave well alone. He plays as if uncertain inwardly, doubtful perhaps of his ability to carry off a romantic part, and this lack of confidence will not let him rest. His delivery of the verse is perfection when he does not force it, but incessant diagrammatic yet nervous gesticulating with his right hand in the early scenes frets away our attention. Similarly the great scene, in which each courtier in turn proves the others forsworn, he plays like a great actor, only to weaken it by whipping up an exit like a concert-party tenor working for a round. This unease apart, it is a superb performance.

The clowns have the same authenticity as the courtiers : however eccentric their antics, they remain people. Mark Dignam makes Holofernes agonisingly funny ; sharp, overbearing, hectoring, but with a saving grace of humour ; in feeling, as in appearance, he is animated Emmett. Miles Malleson dithers and stares hypnotically as Sir Nathaniel ; Paul Rogers is brilliantly blank as Dull; and Baliol Holloway's Armado is deliberately played so that his dignity is not only affectation. George Benson's Costard is a shrewd yokel with a sharp tongue, self-confidence that is not conceit, a salty wit that appraises himself as strictly as others, and that warm, generous humanity children ascribe to teddy-bears : it is a prodigiously fine performance.

The production, excellent throughout, finishes on a note of magic. After the brief announcement of the Princess's father's death, a chill wind blows away the make-believe. Because the actors are people not puppets they are equal to the challenge. Berowne will win his love through a year's penance in the hospitals, " to move wild laughter in the throat of death " ; Armado will redeem his honour by labouring at the plough for the country girl he has wronged. Night falls : a leaf or two shakes from the trees, and as Spring and Winter sing their songs a far-off owl hoots, and we shiver as if a ghost has called. " The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo "—whatever accident or revision put that line at the end of the play, it embodies some half-expressed elegiac emotion that we feel but cannot analyse. It is Hugh Hunt's triumph to have established the full poetic context in which its meaning strikes clean to the heart. He has earned our deepest gratitude.

She Stoops just gets by, thanks to Michael Redgrave's perfect Marlowe, Nigel Stock's half-sharp, malignant Tony, and Miles Malleson's lovable though too mild Hardcastle. But why excellent actors should play at " plastic poses " in natural, easy Oliver Goldsmith, and why Angela Baddeley should give Mrs. Hardcastle in a monstrous make-up her sister might use in a revue, I cannot imagine. To make actors imitate figures from Rowlandson and Hogarth hinders the actors and refers the comedy to the spunging-houses that Goldsmith consciously avoided. The cast made it an amusing evening but this author, who wrote about human beings, not grotesques, would be funnier and more alive if allowed to appear as himself. R. D. SMITH

ROUND THE GALLERIES

AT Gimpel Fils are nine modern French tapestries by Lurçat, Gromaire and others and an exhibition of watercolour drawings by the Irish painter Louis Le Brocquy. Of these modern tapestries there is nothing new to be said : they are monotonously full of sharp rhythms, repeated *ad infinitum* ; one is forced to realise that Lurçat, who has set the pace in this matter of modern tapestry design, was a most unfortunate choice on the part of Fate. Always a brittle designer he has made an evenly see-sawing line (zig-zagging teeth evenly distributed over the entire surface) the order of the day. How much better it would have been if a subtle piece by Brianchon (included in the great exhibition at the Victoria and Albert two years ago), of, I think, Daphnis and Chloe asleep in the moonlight, had been the dominating influence instead.

The drawing part of Louis Le Brocquy's pictures has the appearance of being a carbon-paper tracing : thus " processed," the slightest sketch achieves a pleasantly print-like effect and this practice is now common—a little too common perhaps—among our younger draughtsmen. What is novel and surprising is to find the same sort of quality in Le Brocquy's watercolour " washes." Although the result is a most elegant, delicate set of watercolours, or " prints," the present vogue for monotypes, lithographs, and any other species of type or graph that ingenuity can devise, is not altogether a sign of robust fertility. It suggests a retreat in the direction of the purely decorative : all our younger painters are becoming adepts at turning out a pleasing " object " for the impecunious collector. But vigorous invention can dispense with all these rollings and pattings and stencillings and tracings. It would be good to see plain watercolour used again by a painter of ideas. But the root of the trouble is the impecuniosity of the artists ; they *must* mass-produce a slighter, prettier version of their pictures if nobody will pay more for larger, more serious, effortful and costly versions. Having said this I must quickly remark that Le Brocquy seems more at home in this pleasant, light medium than in oils. A sharp, dainty line overlaid by featherlight touches, which descend on the white paper like coloured snow-crystals, seems a more natural medium for the expression of images which invariably lack density and weight. With triangle-torsos, sickle-arms and turnip-heads, Le Brocquy's figures are witty paper phantoms, too light and diffuse not to seem inflated, distended and *thin* when done in oils on large canvases. A few very small landscapes done in the watercolour-carbon-drawing manner are excellent, notably one of the Chilterns under snow, very reminiscent of Paul Nash, though less crisp.

The landscapes of Lelia Caetani at the Lefevre seem monotonous and ragged in their dry touch if we allow ourselves to think of those huge early panels into which Vuillard wove a whole garden at a time, with every natural detail from grass-shoots to sticky chestnut buds recorded by a separate device that was at once precise as description and wonderfully rich as decoration. Miss Caetani's vineyard in *Autumn*, a tall upright canvas, promises a rich tapestry of interlocked vine-shapes, repetitive yet varied—like Vuillard's chestnut leaves. A closer glance, however, does not disclose a closer texture of design. Her large matt touches—each rather the shape of a

parrot tulip petal—are not quite organised to the point of decorative cohesion: on the other hand they are more deliberately placed than the non-decorative, space-defining touches of an impressionist. She could go either way—towards a more powerful definition of aerial volumes, towards a variation of impressionism, or towards a more intense realization of design at the surface; in this case her ragged blobs would be increasingly enhanced as ragged blobs, the exact character of both the raggedness and the blobbiness being explored and exploited to the full.

At the Hanover Gallery the sculpture of F. E. McWilliam is a virtuoso's performance so far as simple *carving* is concerned. The artistic intuition manifest in these surrealist figures, with limbs but no bodies, is much less praiseworthy: indeed the welding of realistic, almost Ingres-like hands or faces or breasts to a general structure that is more abstract than Henry Moore strikes me as being artistically meaningless. I may not have got the point; I may be blind to the spirit which "unites" these fragments in dissimilar idioms. But they look like a very literal translation into stone and wood of certain of Picasso's surrealist line drawings. Where a change from a Greco-Roman hand and forearm to a torso like a dried fungus was intelligible in a quick pen drawing, the same sort of thing laboriously done out solemnly in the solid looks inapt, to say the least. If we must still have these literary fantasies in art they look better, for instance, in the drawings of Tchelitchew at the same gallery.

PATRICK HERON

RADIO NOTES

GOETHE in Weimar sleeps. But for months the midnight oil has been burning for him in Broadcasting House, and now the fruit of this lucubration is falling about us fast. Centenaries, one supposes, provide a *reason* for programmes, and thus serve to lighten the sense of guilt at times painfully evident in those who live by troubling the ether. (The Arctic tundra, Peter Scott told us in a pleasant talk, is a very silent place. Perhaps it was only my ancient set that caused me to fancy a background of deep and wistful sighs to this statement.) But why confuse centenaries with funerals? On the Third the solemnity of announcers revealing that great Homer died three thousand years ago is communicating itself to the talkers. Miss Elizabeth Wilkinson spoke excellently on Goethe's art and practice of living, but her voice, pleasant in quality, was hushed as if in the very presence of Goethe dying. Twiddling the knob at the end of this, I caught only the tone of what followed. It made me wonder if there was to be a grave announcement by the Director-General at midnight. But we were merely being told of the death of Chopin on October 17, 1849. Let Sisyphus—a more appropriate guardian of the portal, one sometimes feels, than fussy old leisure-class Prospero—at least roll his tombstones with more lightness of air.

The week's novelty was the medieval disputation held by a group of Dominicans in the Old Hall of Lincoln's Inn. There was nothing in the method of this, and little in the incidental allusion, that would not have passed current in the thirteenth century. Here, in fact, were the Schoolmen in their habit as they lived, "spinning out unto us"—if we are to agree with Bacon—"those laborious webs of learning which are extant in their books." At the end I had decidedly the feeling of emerging by the same door through which I had entered. But this holds of a visit to the Ballet—an art to which the entertainment put up by these grave Dominicans seemed at times oddly and delightfully akin.

Far from a novelty was *Waste*, heard in Cynthia Pughe's capable radio version of a couple of years ago. It is strange that so great a Shakespearean as Granville-Barker should here have accepted unreservedly William Archer's notion of drama. Henry Trebell's story is prose to the bone; and where all poetry is absent from the stage, tragedy is slow to appear. Granville-Barker's own intuitive knowledge of this was perhaps responsible for one of the minor curiosities of drama. Twenty years after it first appeared, and preserving the original structure scene by scene, he marked his sense of some radical insufficiency by giving the entire play a fresh garment of words. It is more interesting to compare the texts than to listen in to the play.

There will be no Marlowe centenary until 1964—a year the larger significance of which must be known already to the Corporation's very lift-boys. Thus the only motive behind the producing of *Doctor Faustus* was presumably somebody's unprompted determination to get it done. And how excellent was the result! Basil Ashmore's version represented a sensible handling of the formidable difficulties with which he was faced; his use of the Chapbook of 1592 was happy and his own cobbling unobtrusive; it was no doubt right to give us not the attractively outrageous scene with the Pope, but the Seven Deadly Sins: certainly the opportunity for a series of brilliant vignettes here was admirably taken. Robert Harris's Faustus I thought very good, and Peter Ustinov's Mephistophilis unforgettable. But it was a pity to miss the fact that, in Faustus' last speech, "Ah, Pythagoras' metempsychosis" was designed by Marlowe (despite his Cambridge years) as a resounding instance of his mighty line.

MICHAEL INNES

THE MOVIES

"The Velvet Touch" and "The Big Steal," at the Odeon, Marble Arch
"Any Number Can Play," at the Empire
"The Crooked Way," at the London Pavilion

Hardly a week passes but one American film gives us a whiff of the underworld. Of four new films now showing, three perhaps only graze the surface, but they disturb angry particles and the air is thickened with surfeit. The fourth, moreover, is the undertow of an undertow, fag-end of a Hollywood cycle which has produced some notable successes and disclosed at the same time the sores of a materialist society—the seediness beneath fluorescent glitter and the garbage under the plush excavated and left to lie while cops and robbers dig themselves in for the final battle.

Only in *The Velvet Touch*, directed by John Gage, is murder committed as a spiritual protest—the film's sole claim to distinction. A successful Broadway comedienne, played by Rosalind Russell, is tired of sub-Noel Coward comedies and longs for Ibsen; when her producer forbids *Hedda Gabler* she kills him, manages to deceive the police, goes into rehearsal and then confesses to the crime after the first night (at a performance which omits, by the way, Judge Brack's last line). The would-be smart dialogue and glib characters do not approach reality and accentuate the difficulty nowadays of making us believe in homicide unmotivated by the fleshpots.

In the same programme *The Big Steal*, directed by Don Siegel, offers the disarming prospect of a melodrama taking place in the fresh air, the broad Mexican daylight; the pursuit of a thief who has stolen an army payroll is turned into a fast and entertaining triple car-chase, with a hero and heroine (Robert Mitchum and Jane Greer) lightly playing at playing the ritual love-hate game in a sleek roadster at sixty miles per hour. But with the climax comes a plunge into the familiar darkness—somebody's tucked-away, well-appointed villa where the gangster group is waiting and the greedy, villainous æsthete who cannot abide violence trembles futilely amid his priceless antiques.

Ruthless materialism is taken a little more seriously in Mervyn LeRoy's *Any Number Can Play*, which is concerned with an important American success-figure, the seasoned gambler. What might have been a good melodrama is sacrificed as a vehicle for Clark Gable, who reduces to matinee level the complexities of the character: master of his own luxurious underworld, a gambling-den that looks like a country club, smooth and hard and yet a family man at heart, yearning to bridge the estrangement from his wife and son, and converted through the adventures and intrigues of a single evening to a better way of life (symbolised by a fishing trip). There are, nevertheless, some promising though undeveloped minor characters, many of them excellently played—Mary Astor as an understanding old flame, discovered first of all operating a fruit-machine with an expression of rapt cupidity, Wendell Corey as the gambler's self-despising, liverish brother-in-law driven to petty thefts and deceits, and Lewis Stone as a pitiable old man broken by his mania for roulette.

With *The Crooked Way* comes the real descent into hell, the all-in-one. A thriller set in a no-man's-land called Los Angeles, in back streets unexplored even by Raymond Chandler, and hovering disconcertingly on the edge of a depravity that it never really attains, it tells of an amnesiac gangster ("I've got a piece of steel in my head and no memory left") who comes home to find out about himself. He finds he has to settle a long-standing feud with his wife (whose shoulder he had deliberately burned in a moment of rage), and with another gangster who possesses an army of thugs, lives on nerve-tonic and fastidiously manicures his nails after coshing a rival. The film is directed by Robert Florey with great slowness but a certain authoritative command of detail.

Here, then, it all is; decadence and brutality, loneliness, greed and illicit success, the body soiling the expensive carpet, the smoking revolver in the velvet glove, the desultory sex, the cars racing loudly after one another, the gaming-table vistas and the long dark nights—the lucubrations of tired and mediocre minds and the uncontainable sickness.

GAVIN LAMBERT

The Ballet Rambert, at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith

During the rise of English ballet the Ballet Rambert has been an incubator of new dancers and new ideas. So if it is too continually impoverished of its stars—and many of our finest made their début there—we should not grumble or stay away: Its ballets are seldom dull, and we may always flatter our discrimination by spotting a new star. Robert Hynd at present is one to watch. The present programme offers many object-lessons in small-scale staging and orchestration. Frederick Ashton's *Les Masques*, danced in chic black-and-white costumes to Poulenc's Trio for piano, oboe and bassoon, was as witty and diverting as ever, while, in a slightly broader genre, Anthony Tudor's *Gala Performance*, to Prokofiev's Classical Symphony, said the wicked last word on grand-manner ballet. The new item, *Antonia*, a ballet by Walter Gore to music by Sibelius, unfortunately showed the company to its worst advantage. The orchestral tone was too thin to support the tragic implications of the theme—a lover's disillusion and madness—and the long-drawn out revel-scene seemed messy and purposeless on such a small stage; a pity, for Messrs. Gore, Hinton and Paltenghi, in the leading roles, danced well.

PIETA

Her heart with grief is singular as the sky
That never was so dark. His body sags
Like a fisherman's dripping net, a burden
For all its thinness. The limbs are unruly
As a new-born calf's. O lifeless liveliness
That once moved with such purpose on the earth!
Woman, it is proper you should weep,
Weep for the voice you knew, the step
Familiar from afar, the youth you tended
Growing so tall and a pride. How can you know
How small your Jesus is, the man in man,
Figure on wood and flesh in time?
You are deprived of our advantage:
Wise after the event, we know that Christ
Triumphant is no theme for grief:
Mary, mother, our tears are for you.

CLIFFORD DYMENT

Correspondence

POLICY AND DEVALUATION

SIR,—As a lifelong Tory who has also for some years been a subscriber to your paper, may I trespass on your space to comment on the article "Wages and Devaluation" in your issue of October 15th? The first part of this article appears to me to be very good sense, but the last two paragraphs degenerate into Socialist propaganda of a familiar and misleading kind.

The writer speaks of the owner of shares being able to take advantage of profits swollen by devaluation by selling or pledging his shares and using the proceeds for current spending. It is true the trend of profits may continue to rise, but share values show no signs of responding to this tendency. In fact, the *Financial Times* index of ordinary shares now stands well below its peak of early 1947, although on the whole profits have, since then, still been rising.

Incidentally, this peak corresponded to the post-war high of Government securities and was largely brought about by the then Chancellor's pursuit of ultra cheap money. But even at its peak, the ordinary share index had not risen proportionately as much as either wholesale or retail prices—so, in general, the owner of ordinary shares was worse off, in terms of real values, than before the war.

The truth is that the rate of interest and the expectation of future dividends are the two chief factors in determining the rise or fall of ordinary shares, and dividend limitation, together with the effects of the Profits Tax (which falls solely upon the ordinary shareholder) have effectively prevented any rise in ordinary share values.

It is difficult to see how a capital levy could have the effect of discouraging the spending of capital for current consumption. In fact, the more frightened the owner of capital becomes that he is to be expropriated by this type of taxation, the more likely he is to spend his capital on the principle of "eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die."

In speaking of "fair shares," and "equality of sacrifice" everything depends upon the standard of comparison used. If this is between to-day and 1938, the last normal pre-war year, the following table in the *Economist* of October 8th is illuminating :—

	1938 (£Mn.)	1948 (£Mn.)	Change %
Gross Totals :—			
Wages	1,735	3,975	+129
Distributed profits of companies	506	730	+ 44
Net Totals after deduction of direct taxation :—			
Wages	1,682	3,635	+116
Distributed profits of companies	465	639	+ 37
Net Totals adjusted for rise in prices :—			
Wages	1,682	2,020	+ 20
Distributed profits of companies	465	355	— 24

The *Economist* goes on :

"It is perfectly clear from these figures that the principle of equality of sacrifice would justify a reduction in profits tax far better than an increase. It is true that, if the Chancellor gets his way in holding down wages, wage-earners are now about to lose a small part of their gains of the past decade. But does "equality of sacrifice" mean that profit earners are to be soaked whenever wage-earners lose anything without sharing in any of their gains?"

Briefly, however desirable further redistribution of income may seem, there can be little doubt that further steps towards it at the present time would be both socially unjust and economically harmful to the country as a whole.

Perhaps an entry for a recent competition (for which no prize is claimed) might have read :—

"For recovery we must soak the rich further,
Crowther :
"You're putting the horse behind the cart in,
Martin."

19, Throgmorton Avenue, T. E. W. WADDINGTON
London, E.C.2.

Exeter
October 27th 1949

Dear Joanna,

I'm taking you at your word and coming up next Wednesday to stay a couple of nights. George will be in the north most of the week.

My main job is to go to the Sunday Times Book Exhibition at Grosvenor House, where I hope to get most of my Christmas presents. I shall gather an armful of books for various people, but my serious gifts this year are going to be Ganymed Facsimiles. Perhaps you remember that back in the summer I went with Sarah to the little gallery the Ganymed people have in Great Turnstile, off Holborn, where she was collecting her copy of one of Henry Moore's drawings. Father had already told me how wonderful these facsimiles are, because he went to their pre-view some months ago and had to admit that he couldn't tell the reproductions from their originals which were hung alongside.

I shall spend most of Thursday at Grosvenor House because it's a difficult job choosing the four or five I want to buy. Father has the Ganymed Picasso "Boy with a Horse" in his study and it's such a lovely thing that I'm tempted to get one, but oh dear, for whom? I thought I might give it to John, to enlighten his gloomy chambers but perhaps better still the Wilson Steer "Misty morning."

There is no difficulty about George. I'm giving him the Cotman of Dieppe Harbour. He'll love it, I know. It will be just as easy to settle the Fry's, who are Blake fans. The Ganymed Blake is the most extraordinary reproduction I've ever seen and to be able to get this for five guineas with Blake originals fetching thousands, seems too good to be true.

Choosing is going to be very difficult, they've about a dozen from the Tate including Turner, Samuel Palmer, Gainsborough, Vuillard and Degas, and other early water colours besides Cotman's. Do escape on Thursday afternoon & meet me at the Ganymed stand which I believe is on the balcony at Grosvenor House, or would evening be better? It's open until about 8·0

Till Wednesday then, Love to you John and the twins

Judith

TRUCE IN GREECE

SIR,—May I submit that the case for the return of democracy to Greece is not altered by the guerrillas' readiness to stop fighting and to maintain an armed truce in the civil war?

Both sides have been guilty of acts of commission and omission which have held from the Greek people the right to the democratic existence for which they have waited and suffered since the end of the war.

The Administration, which perceived no other means of government than the imposition of measures that have brought misery in their train and have estranged many who had no political leanings towards Communism, cannot be logically considered as the appointed instrument of reform.

It is also true that E.A.M., by abstaining from the 1946 elections (despite conditions of terrorism in many parts of the land) and assenting to the plebiscite on the future of the monarchy, displayed a lack of political balance that re-established the fading Populist party and gained for it the support of those who felt it was a choice between that or Communism.

The United Nations, being presumably above political conflict within member-countries, has been presented with an opportunity in the truce which is at once a test of its humanity and statesmanship. If the Assembly expects the present Greek Government to "change its spots" and to carry out obvious reforms, the opportunity will be lost of re-creating unity in Greece and thus restoring its shattered economy. A new Administration is clearly needed, both for internal and Balkan pacification.

15 New Street, E.C.2. E. H. ATHANASSOGLOU

YUGOSLAV LIBERATION

SIR,—L. G. has no grounds whatever for his statement that my book *Eastern Approaches* supports his (and Moscow's) contention that Yugoslavia was liberated by the Red Army and not by the Yugoslavs themselves.

In my book, I make it quite clear that the opposite was the case. The Red Army, in fact, only crossed the Yugoslav frontier in the autumn of 1944 when the Germans, actively engaged by the partisans all over the country, were already in full flight from Yugoslavia.

It is true that the Red Army played an important part in the battle of Belgrade, which lies in easy reach of the frontier and fell on October 20. This, a few token deliveries of arms and equipment, and the pressure exerted by Marshal Tolbukhin's forces in Hungary on the Shrem front was the sum total of Russian wartime help to the partisans.

All the rest of the country was cleared of Germans without Soviet assistance. Nor can there be much doubt that, even without Russian help, Belgrade itself would, in any case, have fallen to the partisans in a very short time.

One other point. Having made one (not very lucky) dip into my book, L. G. may also care to glance at the passages concerning Mr. Churchill's attitude towards Yugoslavia. From these he will see that, contrary to his own supposition, the British Government's policy was in fact based primarily upon military considerations and that it was not deterred from supporting Tito by the knowledge that he was a Communist. FITZROY MACLEAN

House of Commons.

SIR,—Yugoslavs do not claim that they liberated their own country. They acknowledge that the Red Army's role was decisive. They claim, however, that they forged their own military organisation and freed all of their country except its key points. The only other Eastern European country which succeeded in doing this was Albania, largely through Yugoslav help.

Secondly, they claim that whatever the merits of the Rajk trial it did not implicate the Yugoslav leaders. False evidence was given about the presence of Yugoslav International Brigaders in French concentration camps. Some of them were never in France at all; one Yugoslav named in this charge did not even fight in Spain. The Chief Prosecutor at Budapest was unable to give the date of the meeting between Rajk and Rankovic. Much of the evidence against the Yugoslav Government and Communist Party was given by Brankov, whom all sides recognise as a criminal, and it was not substantiated in any way.

The Yugoslavs are accused of nationalism, but it was they who pioneered the idea of international youth projects, and they still give any foreigner the chance of living and working in their country, and really understanding its social and cultural conditions. The Bulgarians imitated this idea, but gave it up when they found that their visitors were not all fervent Communists. The Czechs and Hungarians, who have invited foreigners to special youth festivals, hardly give foreigners the same opportunity to examine conditions. PETER NEWMARK.

AN EAR FOR POETRY

SIR,—Mr. Davy's letter about Louis MacNeice's "Poetry, The Public and the Critic" raises some interesting points. But I think when he writes "I wonder if an ear for poetry, similar to an ear for music, is not required" he shoots about two inches wide of the most important. For, and this is more especially true of modern poetry, "the perception of poetry as a sound-image pattern" is, it seems to me, essentially visual. The link between the poem as it appears on the page, and its impact on the mind, comes from a sense reaction that is instinctively pictorial rather than musical. A good reader of poetry (cf. a good instrumentalist in music) can make almost anything that is not nonsense, and that has a few of the basic perquisites of poetry, *sound* fairly impressive. The eye is not nearly so easily deceived. The feeling, after a very hasty first glance, that any particular poem is a good one, comes from an ability to *see* that poem through images, to *sense* its atmosphere and kind of meaning.

I believe that even with poets who rely to a great extent on vowel sounds and great alliterative chords—like Mr. Dylan Thomas and Dr. Edith Sitwell—the necessary instinct which appreciation of them demands is again essentially a sense of shape, of plastic form, of the physical, as well as mental sensation that imagery transmits and within and on which the imagination and intellect then work.

Certainly, an ear for the sound of words, for the rhetoric and harmony of language, is important for the understanding of poetry, But equally valuable, and infinitely more neglected, would be an attempt to make people apprehend the pattern Mr. Davy outlined (*poetic* meaning rather than *ordinary* meaning) through the visual impact of words. ALAN ROSS

SIR,—I hope that the letter by Mr. Charles Davy will not start some research worker in education in pursuit of another March Hare. Too many hours and days have already been wasted by people who have covered up the obvious in statistics or jargon in order to reveal it again with an air of discovery. The mere fact that people are able to distinguish between one word and another and between the different intonations of the voice is sufficient proof that the ability which Mr. Davy would like to see discovered by a process of research is one of the commonest characteristics of human beings.

The enjoyment of rhythm, whether in words or sounds, is almost universal, as every mother who chants nursery rhymes to her child knows. It is the experience of most teachers who do not spoil their poetry lessons by their own intrusions that young children, almost without exception, enjoy poems with a pronounced rhythm. Failure to enjoy poetry in adult life is due not to any physiological handicap comparable to tone deafness, but to mishandling of poetry by teachers who in so many cases have had to put examinations before education. Having thus been discouraged by their early training, many people have never been sufficiently interested to make the effort necessary for the understanding of poetry which has rhythm of a more subtle kind. If gramophone records of modern poetry, well spoken, are played and replayed to people who have admitted to a dislike of modern poetry, it is found again and again after several hearings than an astonishing change has taken place in the attitude of the listeners towards poems which formerly meant nothing to them.

HUNTER DIACK

SIDNEY WEBB

SIR,—Lionel Butler says in his review of *The Webbs and Their Work* (*N.S. & N.* Oct. 8th) that Sidney Webb once read the 1st vol. of *Capital* in an hour. When I first heard of Webb's prowess at reading it was 100 pages an hour; later another informant, in an aside like Mr. Butler, said 200. Mr. Butler does much better. The latest edition of *Capital* without introductions and prefaces runs to 800 pages. That's some going—a page every four and a half seconds. Is it possible for the eyes to gather in every word in a page in 4½ seconds? And, if it is, can the mind—even Webb's—grasp their meaning, a meaning which in the first 100 pages at least of *Capital* involves some pretty involved argument?

I submit the idea is absurd and its absurdity must have struck Mr. Butler if he had given it a moment's thought—say 4½ seconds worth!

Now some of Webb's friends should be able to give us more credible but still astonishing examples of his reading speed. This subject for me has the charm of those tales of conversations with old men whose grandmothers described their dancing partners at the Court of—Charles II was it?

Could someone who knows first-hand tell us how fast Webb really read? P. D. HOLDEN

"Y.Y."

SIR,—In his moving tribute to Robert Lynd Mr. Desmond MacCarthy tells us parenthetically that ". . . none of Hazlitt's many essays was reprinted till he had been dead fifty years . . ." Mr. MacCarthy's memory has played him false. Hazlitt died in 1830. I have Hazlitt's "Literary Remains" (1836), "Sketches and Essays" (1839), "The Round Table" (1841), "Criticisms on Art" (1844), "Criticisms and Dramatic Essays" (1851), "The Plain Speaker" (1851); and "The Life of Napoleon" (1852), all dated after 1830 and before 1860.

I feel sure that "Affable Hawk"—*magistrorum magister*—will suitably admonish Mr. MacCarthy.

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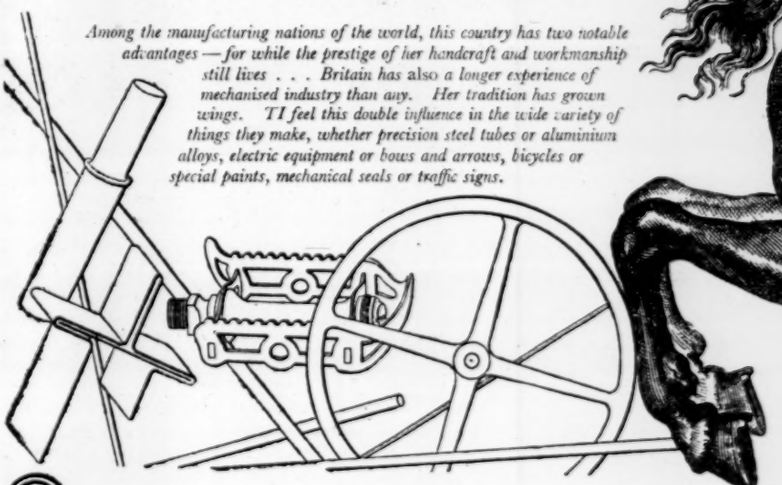

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE true best-sellers, the writers who sell not by tens of thousands but by millions, who are translated into many languages and are devoured by the Chinese and the Hindu as well as by the worried readers of Memphis and Potters Bar, are names unknown to most of us. They are, the embarrassed publisher will whisper, the purveyors of consoling piety and the big brotherly sermon. Their popularity suggests that, though the centres of religious faith may have failed, the outlying areas concerned with worry are very thriving. There is also the universal love of being scolded and of living in the moral glow of advice one does not intend to take; and beyond this, the general loneliness and sadness. But what kind of people write these books? With one kind we are familiar: among those who help life's weary ones over the stile and bring living water to the thirsty we have seen characters of notable toughness and breezy business enterprise. The modern Soapy Sam is a natural muscler-in. But there is another, rarer and congenial figure: the pious writer whose dry yet abundant personality belies the triteness or the simple eccentricity of his beliefs, who brings to the well-worn keys of the sectarian organ a wayward touch and an unexpected honesty.

Hannah Whitall Smith, the enormously popular author of *The Christian's Secret to a Happy Life*, was one of these uncommon spirits. She was an American Quaker—a sect in which intellectual gifts have always been strong—born in the thirties of last century and who settled in England as first a preacher and then a temperance worker in the late seventies. We know about her from the autobiography of her son Logan Pearsall Smith, from a narrative by Ray Strachey, *A Quaker Grandmother*, and now from her letters* which her son prepared for publication before her death and to which Mr. Gathorne-Hardy has written an affectionate preface.

I have not had the courage to look up *The Christian's Secret*, though it is said to be a minor religious classic; after reading her pithy, revealing and diverting letters, so downright, so sensible and so slyly inquiring in their tone, I am strongly tempted to have a dip. If I hold back it is partly because I cannot quite believe that the main charm of her letters could be present in it: the revelation of a formidable and endearing personality and, above all, her eye for the comedies as well as the solemnities of conscience. The woman who told a group of exalted school-girls to go home and not to be too unselfish, is not the common labourer in the Lord's vineyard. In 1847, to take the earliest letter in this collection, Philadelphia was beginning to embrace the pleasures of solipsism, transcendentalism and was heading, I suppose, for Mind Cure; and to argue, for example, that there could be no thunder unless there was an ear to hear it. The young Quaker wrote to her sister:

> Ask my father what he thinks, I don't see how it can be possible, just suppose a horse was to fall down and nobody near to hear it, according to that it would make no noise, but if someone came by in the midst, it would begin to make a noise, Oh! it cannot be.

It is refreshing to find common sense in the religious, but we do not go to them for that. In times of irreligion the comedy of conscience seems to us self-consuming, and our imagination is altogether more ambitious, as modern conversions seem to show. But *A Religious Rebel* does dispose of one common delusion: that the life of the Puritan is dulled, chilled, charmless and without exhilaration, and made liverish by cant and the dread of pleasure. So it may appear to ourselves from the outside. From the inside, as books like Gosse's *Father and Son* have shown, and these letters too, the view is quite different. Increase the sense of sin and prohibition and inner experience takes on drama and intensity. Forbidden works of art in her childhood—let us call this author by the initials she was known by as a writer—H.W.S. almost swooned at the sight of her first Old Master, and her first undraped statue, and her pleasure was sharpened by a sense of its "wickedness" which she, of course, did not believe in. It is true that an undesirable archness seizes the lapsing Puritan and a great deal of religious humour is esoteric and painful; but one sees how dramatic life must have seemed to H.W.S. To want to be sure that one has been "called to bear a burden," to see that now is the time to "labour" with a brother and sister in peril, to distinguish between the true "call" and "vain" human ambition, to hunt out the deviationists—there were Hicksites in Philadelphia who combined heresy with an embarrassing commonness!—to seize "doubts" by the throat and work out the conundrums of eternal damnation: these are absorbing dramas and it is the greatest mistake to suppose that blood is not warmed by them, the imagination not ignited and delectable pleasure not obtained.

What is so often lacking, of course, is the ironic eye of self-criticism, the faculty of individual growth—so much easier to repeat the party gramophone record—and that honesty which is rare anywhere and which we call originality. H.W.S. had no reservations when she was young about her desire to distinguish herself, to stand out, to dominate as a preacher. She was clever and beautiful and revelled in public success, but was careful to laugh at her own pretensions. To the dismay of many she became broader and broader in her religion, with a broadness that, we are glad to see, defied the prayers of the orthodox. She could not believe in eternal damnation and in later years, though a pacifist, was willing to fight the Turks. Her mind was independent. She had the courage—it is not common among puritans—of her feelings, though she did not care for feeling in religion and distrusted mysticism. She did not pretend that she was not a wife and mother first; to this womanly absorption in her own private life she no doubt owed her strength when her career and her husband's was wrecked. (He was seen receiving a kiss from one of his followers. The kiss was thought to be not sisterly). Philosophically H.W.S. gave up her success and survived the disaster better than "poor Robert" did. Years later she wrote to a woman friend: "It is the rule of my life never to think over my past action."

The pieties of H.W.S. are alleviated by a pragmatism which was often ruthless. As Mr. Robert Gathorne-Hardy says hers was a religion of the will. She had a short way with "doubts": the cure was to take pencil and paper and write out "I undertake not to have doubts again." The cure was very often effective.

The beautiful Quaker became a masterful old lady. There were moments when she had a "steam-roller" manner; it is said that she occasionally looked upon her unhappy and embittered husband with condescension, not to use a stronger word. She firmly said that she liked men but disliked husbands and in this she spoke as a gifted Victorian woman who had found herself married at the age of 19, without having much idea of what marriage would be. It is interesting that her conversion to an active religious life belongs to this period. The compensation for the disaster which her husband brought upon them, was her life in Europe. At once she found herself among a group of the English aristocracy who had taken to religion. She adored aristocrats because, she said, they were more like Americans than the other classes, in that they had no one to "Lord and Lady it over them," and she plunged delightedly into research among the habits of the worldly at Ascot, in country houses, on the hunting field.

One of her severest struggles was with the arts in Europe; and especially with the works of the Old Masters. Tintoretto she hated—"a cataract of human legs, arms and bodies . . . and if that is an example of Ruskin's taste, I am thankful I do not share it." No doubt the old Quaker dread of the vanity of visual art was rising in her . . ." but one must be honest and bear the consequences." Honesty, later on, when she found herself in old age bringing up a family of grandchildren, made her perceive that her deficiency had been the common one of Victorian women—the lack of advanced education. With that they might stand up to Tintoretto and their husbands.

At 74 a suffragette, a believer in the young—"it stands to reason that young people *must* know better than we do"—her first principle (her son wrote) was that "the young must have their fun." For in her severe Quaker childhood she had been very happy playing, not with other children, but with her parents in one of those domestic idylls which the Puritan seeks.

> Never (writes Mr. Robert Gathorne-Hardy), was there so splendid or so abject an infatuation. She allowed (her grandchildren) to drag her crippled old body up to the top of a haystack; she went fifteen times down the water-chute with them during a single afternoon; she sat on the ice at Regent's Park while they skated and chilblains gathered over her feet; she even tried to hire an elephant for them to ride on in the country, and only gave up this magnificent project when she discovered the animal would need at least a ton of fodder daily.

She was tolerant. It was amusing to disapprove of smoking and to give a handsome cigarette case to a daughter, so that she might at least sin "in comfort," delightful to note that the vicar had vowed to convert Mr. Berenson, Bertrand Russell, Roger Fry and, drily, to wish him luck. And it was always pleasant to moralise on those instances of religious fanaticism which she had collected in one of her books. On Mrs. Lee and Mrs. Spafford, perhaps, who believed themselves to be entities called Moses and The Righteous Branch. Mrs. Lee believed that a peculiar cracking of her jaw was "a sign" from the Lord, but, her husband objecting to the noise, she prayed it to be transferred to another part, which indeed happened: her eyes were drawn back into her head as if by strings. Or there was Mr. Oliphant who believed that we must search for our Sympneuma, or spiritual counterpart. Or the saintly priest who had told her that Anglican baptisms were invalid because the words "In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost," were not pronounced at the identical moment when the water touched the forehead. A woman so overwhelmingly on the move and noticing, so clever and so managing, so wise and worldly wise must have been alarming; one wonders a little about "poor Robert."

V. S. PRITCHETT

**A Religious Rebel. The Letters of H.W.S.* Edited by Logan Pearsall Smith. *Nisbet.* 10s. 6d.

TREASURE IN HEAVEN

Eleanor Rathbone. By MARY STOCKS. *Gollancz.* 21s.

Sir Stafford Cripps. By ERIC ESTORICK. *Heinemann.* 21s.

The Two Villages. By LORD ELTON. *Collins.* 8s. 6d.

In his new and elegant volume of reflections on British decadence, Lord Elton observes, "If during the last two hundred years our private conduct and public policy had been chiefly governed by a desire to achieve happiness in another world rather than material comfort in this one, our prospects would certainly not have been so sombre to-day." And a little later he adds, "The supreme wretchedness is that of finding happiness in this world."

By this definition, Eleanor Rathbone was a supremely wretched woman. Brought up in a strict Nonconformist tradition, she retained the ethics of Christianity but discarded its theology. This world was enough for her; she enjoyed its beauties and fought its miseries with gusto and selflessness, increasing the sum of human happiness without any regard for the treasure laid up in Heaven. If this is an example of supreme wretchedness, let's have more of it!

In writing the biography of an intimate personal friend, Mrs. Stocks has avoided the danger of mere eulogy. If her style on occasion falls into an academic archness, and the details of feminist organisation sometimes pall on a mere male, the record is carefully compiled and often intensely moving. Here, you feel, as you turn back from the last page to refresh your memory of the earlier chapters, here was a great personality. But precisely why? Miss Rathbone achieved a great deal inside and outside the House of Commons, and unlike most "do-gooders" she had a shrewd grasp of political realities. Yet she was not an outstanding Parliamentarian, since she possessed neither skill in debate nor a feeling for Parliament as such. Though her early passion was for philosophy—with a quite inadequate schooling, she nearly got a first in "Greats" at Oxford—she was not a creative thinker. Nor was she a great *woman*: her indignation at suffering in the mass left her little sympathy for mere individuals. She was in fact the supreme expression of that spinsterish devotion to causes which so irritates the professional politician; the personification of all those busybody societies which have pried into other people's activities, exasperated civil servants, despised office and honours, and finally accomplished almost every great reform, from the abolition of slave labour to Eleanor Rathbone's own greatest achievement, family allowances. She showed that it is still possible to be a politician without seeking power, and to practise Christian ethics without the certainty of an after-life.

In both respects she differed profoundly from the subject of Mr. Estorick's biography. To Sir Stafford Cripps, politics without power and Christianity without faith seem equally meaningless. Yet he and Miss Rathbone were products of the same environment, unusually gifted children of affluent yet strenuous Christian homes. The Rathbones of Liverpool and the Crippses were dynasties, not of the nobility but of the squirearchy of the professions, and of commerce. Both children were predestined by heredity and home training for public service as leaders of what seemed at the turn of the century to be a stable social order. As they grew up, both reserved their affections and sense of humour for a tiny and extremely private circle of friends, treating other human beings as means or, alternatively, obstacles, to their selfless ends.

But here the resemblance ends. Miss Rathbone, rebelling against the family tradition, as personified by her grandmother, plunged into the feminist movement and became an intellectual radical. A conscientious objector against the lethargy of officialdom, she spent her life probing and exposing accepted injustices, as near home as the status of policemen's widows, or as remote as female circumcision in the Sudan.

Sir Stafford, on the other hand, has retained not only the religion of his family, but its orthodoxy. Unsurpassed as a lawyer, enormously gifted as a technician and administrator, he has never shown any inclination to challenge his own first principles. Compared with Miss Rathbone's, his published books are banal, and the poems and travel sketches which Mr. Estorick here publishes for the first time, are equally derivatory. The motives of the individual and the springs of history are for him matters of faith, not of speculation; the intellect and the imagination must remain the instrument of conscience, not its co-equal.

Moreover, whereas Miss Rathbone plunged as a young girl into social reform and political agitation—reaching Westminster in 1929 only after she had learnt politics from the bottom upwards—Stafford Cripps was content to remain a brilliant lawyer and a family man until he was forty. The shock of the first world war led him, after consultation with his old headmaster, Dr. Burge, into voluntary work in the "World Alliance to promote international friendship through the Churches"; and throughout the Twenties he still strenuously believed that this was the right and only road to real peace. Apparently it was not until Herbert Morrison, aware of the shortage of Socialist Law Officers, approached him in 1929, that he thought seriously about politics.

Sir Stafford seems to have joined the Labour Party less because he was convinced of Socialism than because of a decision to enter the field of public service, traditional to his family. But within a few months he had to make a major political decision. Requested by MacDonald to stay on in the National Government, he refused. The electoral debacle left the junior Law Officer along with Mr. Attlee and George Lansbury, as the only effective leaders of the Opposition.

Gene Fowler

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Mr. Estorick's story of the next decade is told in considerable detail, but it fails to explain the fantastic contradiction between the self-willed rebel of the 1930's and the Christian lawyer of the 1920's and 1940's. There is an obvious continuity between the outlook of the eager Churchman in the World Alliance and that of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer; they breathe the same exalted air of Christian fellowship, with its ideal of a community transcending class and party. But what relation has either the young or the mature Cripps to the crude Marxist who plunged headlong into Labour leadership and headlong out again? Were those years a mere aberration, or do they disclose another side of his personality?

Part of the answer is to be found in the crushing defeat which was Sir Stafford's first impression of Socialist politics. In the Thirties even Mr. Attlee and Dr. Dalton, for a short time, were prospective class-warriors and revolutionaries. For such experienced politicians, Marxism provided a temporary exculpation in defeat; but to Sir Stafford, it came as a political faith to match his personal religion. Unphilosophic by temperament, he became an unphilosophic revolutionary, wasting little of his legal acumen on analysing the ardent dogma. Mr. Estorick describes him as an empiricist; but this is at best a half-truth. In practical affairs, no man can be more objective and matter-of-fact, but in matters of faith he is a fundamentalist, and his intellect only amasses the evidence to demonstrate something that needs no demonstration.

Conversion to Marxism led him into a political blind alley, as well as some injudicious friendships, from which the war miraculously saved him; and his mission to Moscow completed the purge. By 1945, fortified by his practical experience in the Ministry of Aircraft Production, Cripps had evolved a concept of democratic planning which reconciled the arrogant Fabian tidiness of his aunt, Beatrice Webb, with his father's gentler view of the Christian community. Already on May 6th, 1945, he was saying:

> We say that all industry and all great services like transport and coal and power supply must be so organised as to give to the people as a whole the maximum that is possible. In fact the production of the country must be considered as a great public service, as in fact it is, and that we must not only see to it that we get produced those things that we want. In other words the necessaries for the country and the people must take priority over the luxuries and semi-luxuries. In order to achieve that end we must be prepared to see whatever method of organising our industry proves to be best. We have no interest in preserving or destroying private enterprise except to create efficiency in our production.

Mr. Estorick has been surprisingly successful in writing the biography of a living statesman. I could have dispensed with a good deal of the so-called historical background; but the book contains a mass of unpublished letters and quotations from diaries which are enormously revealing. The final impression they leave is not of a radical but of a Coriolanus, serene in the inner councils of state but shy, and so disdainful, of the boisterous fellowship and conflict of everyday politics—an orthodox public servant, but an erratic tribune of the people.

What resemblance is there between the strenuous Christianity of the Chancellor and the moralisings of *The Two Villages*? Like Sir Stafford, Lord Elton has swung back to Christian orthodoxy from the heady extremism of his political career, which brought him a peerage from Ramsay MacDonald. But Lord Elton has swung a good deal further. In this book, a semi-fictional account of one day in his life, two themes predominate. We hear a good deal about the tasteful furnishings of his country mansion, and the quality of his rock-garden; and from time to time we are playfully asked what Trollope would think of a peer washing up and generally roughing it with the commonalty. This light theme is counterbalanced by a sustained indictment of materialism and Socialism—as expressed particularly in the writings of H. G. Wells and the activities of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning—and a call to look heavenwards in an age plunging to disaster.

I fancy that Sir Stafford feels a great deal more in common with Miss Rathbone's "materialism" than with Lord Elton's complacent brand of Christianity.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

THE PROMISED LAND

Promise and Fulfilment: Palestine, 1917-1949. By ARTHUR KOESTLER. *Macmillan.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Koestler's book is divided into three parts. First he gives a historical account and his own interpretation of events in Palestine from the Balfour Declaration to the emergence of the sovereign, independent State of Israel and the final show-down between Irgun and the Israeli Government in the tragedy of the *Altalena* in 1948. The second part consists of personal and immediate impressions in extracts from a diary kept by him during a visit to the country in 1948. The third part is critical and deals with the problems of the political structure and cultural future of the new State.

It is both a moving and brilliant book. The brilliance is in Mr. Koestler's writing and in his restless and intelligent imagination. Any book about Palestine must be moving if it is written with sincerity by a man who feels deeply the terror and pity in manifestations of large-scale human folly. It is difficult to imagine how any one who cares for our traditions and our repute can read the bare history of our actions in Palestine under Mr. Bevin's policy without horror and shame. A person of Mr. Koestler's origins and experiences might have been excused if he had allowed indignation occasionally to obscure his judgment. He never allows this to happen. It is his intelligence and intellectual agility which enable him to be so scrupulously fair to and so critical of all sides. The key to his book and to its achievement may perhaps be found in his own statement of his "axiomatic belief that there are more fools than knaves on this earth, whether in Whitechapel or Whitehall." It is a profound truth, which we all admit unwillingly, that the smallest and greatest crimes of individuals and of nations are far more often due to the stupidity than to the wickedness of individuals, from the petty pilferer to the Foreign Secretary.

The past is past even in Palestine. The record of our actions in pursuit of Mr. Bevin's policy has been one of ignominious failure as well as of shame. In certain circumstances there may be great merit in obstinacy, and any one may have the misfortune stupidly to back the wrong horse. But there can really be no merit in obstinacy which continues to back the wrong horse, even when you know that it dropped dead in the last race in which you lost your money on it. After reading Mr. Koestler's book, one feels that nothing which we can do can probably ever completely make good the irreparable damage to our position and interests in the Middle East caused by the Government's policy. But something can be done to repair past errors and to bring peace and stability to the area. It can only be done if we reverse our disastrous policy of encouraging the Arab League to liquidate the Jews or the Jewish State in Palestine and of opposing the State of Israel on every pretext or occasion. Our true interests are in a peaceful and prosperous Palestine, and therefore in a peaceful and prosperous Israel. Our past errors have made this end, a reconciliation of Jews and Arabs, extremely difficult; but it is not impossible. But the first step must be to prove by our actions that we desire friendship and co-operation with the new State. Unfortunately those who were responsible for the old disastrous policy remain in control, and there is no evidence that they have learnt anything from experience.

Mr. Koestler is almost as critical of the Jews

I heard it from a Grenadier
Who greeted me in Gloucester,
Who heard it from a Signalman,
Who got it from his Sister
(As trim a little turtle-dove
As ever flapped a duster),
Who said it was in
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and the Israeli Government as he is of the British and Mr. Bevin. The last part of his book is exceptionally interesting, particularly in his account of the fantastic influence and effect of religious orthodoxy upon the Government and people.

LEONARD WOOLF

A PONDERING MAN

Journal of a Visit to London and the Continent, 1849-50. By HERMAN MELVILLE. *Cohen & West.* 21*s.*

A long-nagging, long-neglected curiosity about the personality of the man who wrote *Moby Dick* caused me to turn with interest to this *Journal*, never before published, which he wrote during a visit to London and bits of Europe in 1849. Even if one isn't excessively bothered by the urge to grade and classify, *Moby Dick* still remains annoyingly unmanageable, refusing to occupy a fixed place in the affections. Gratifying and dismaying, boring and thrilling, commonplace and profound, all at once, all in a jumble, it is like some old crammed shop of antiques, or curios, which one can't pass by, which is full of bargains and rubbish. Sixty years after Melville's death, nearly a hundred since the writing of his masterpiece, the critic is still needed who will come along with a pantechnicon and sort out the entire mass.

A big job, and unfortunately this *Journal* throws hardly so much as a torch's light into the uncleared corners. There are only seventy pages of it, short pages at that; the rest of the book, rather more than a hundred pages, is filled up by admirable, respectfully exhaustive notes prepared by Melville's grand-daughter, who is also the editor. Excusably, Mrs. Metcalf offers to the world these remains of her famous grandfather with something of a flourish. Her notes, supplementing his austere brevities, illumine a great number of curiosities, a work both interesting and valuable. But the grand curio, Melville himself, remains impenetrably dark.

There is no hint, in this record of a seventeen-week trip, of the author of *Moby Dick*; which is more surprising than one might think, since he began to write that book almost immediately after his return to America. He was twenty-nine, with all his sea-wanderings behind him, with some fame already as a romancer of the South Seas, and it seems clear that this European journey coincided with a watershed of his secret life. You feel, as you read, that Melville was looking for something. It's true, as his grand-daughter says, that there appears here the "conflict between his eagerness to experience for himself the wonders of the magical East and his homesick longing for his young wife and son in America." But that is all that appears, and one feels that there was a great deal more. The *Journal* gives off a curious whiff of panic. A strong initial impulse carries him buoyantly across the Atlantic, through pleasant lively descriptions of days afloat, and of passengers—

> We have also, a middle-aged English woman, who sturdily walks the deck, and prides herself upon her sea legs, and being an old tar—

settles him in London in lodgings overlooking the river ("a guinea and a half per week. Very cheap."), and sets him to hunting up publishers, public executions, old monuments, theatres, chops, steaks, stout, and cigar divans, and presenting letters of introduction, with which he was well supplied. Suddenly this impulse seems to fail. Loneliness and sadness well up—just when many doors are beginning to open to him—and spread a fog through it. He is in Paris, in Brussels, in Cologne, on the Rhine, then doubling back, and all these movements seem snatched and hurried, observation becomes cursory, as though everything in him was yielding before the gale-force urge to get back home at all costs.

"... there is much to interest a pondering man like me," he notes while wandering about Cologne, waiting for a river-steamer. What the ponderings were, apart from briefest hints, Melville doesn't tell. But the phrase itself seems far more applicable to his state of mind when in London. London, it is clear, fascinated his imagination, it is the dominant presence of the *Journal*, and one is struck with a regret that he didn't stay longer and master it.

> While on one of the Bridges, the thought struck me again that a fine thing might be written about a Blue Monday in November London—a city of Dis (Dante's)—clouds of smoke—the damned, etc.—coal barges—coaly waters, cast-iron Duke, etc.—its marks are left upon you, etc., etc., etc.

This London of 1849, vast, gloomy, energetic, ambiguous, afflicted with extremes, repeatedly cholera-stricken: in which, *The Times* asserted, "we would all rather die of cholera than be cured by Mr. Chadwick" (who had constantly, against derision and indifference, proposed a Board of Health): this London would have been a true subject for Melville. He was stirred, thirty years later, by James Thomson's poem *The City of Dreadful Night*.

Here everything peters out; and perhaps one can only say about this *Journal* that it leaves the same rather disquieting impression, an impression of horses changed in mid-stream, which one gets from much of Melville's writing, not excepting *Moby Dick*. It was a contemporary American critic who doubted "whether any of Melville's readers understood the real drift of his mind, *or whether he understood it himself*." This is not to suggest that he was other than a very great writer, far from it. But he was a man of great reserves, hardened by circumstances and the suppression of inner torments. Neither scholarship nor biography are strong enough to break through these, as the *Journal* shows well enough. What is needed is prolonged attention by a great critic, one both imaginative and analytic. Melville cannot be written about briefly. To go back to *Moby Dick* is only to go back to steeper, more dangerous confusions and to realise that time and tools and plans are needed for a proper assault. In fact a well-equipped expedition, capable of not being swallowed alive, like Jonah, inside its subject. Melville, in all his uncouth stature, is recognisable but still not wholly accessible, and it's only the view from *outside*, taking in all imperfections—of century and country, of exiled Scots conscience and fustian German metaphysics, of personal disappointment and pride—which will bring him within reach. It's really time that this job was done.

GILES ROMILLY

NEW NOVELS

A Tale of Poor Lovers. By VASCO PRATOLINI. *Hamish Hamilton.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mariam. By ENNIO FLAIANO. *Lehmann.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

The Far Cry. By EMMA SMITH. *McGibbon & Kee.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

Of all the leading novelists of the post-war Italian school only Elsa Morandi and Brancati remain to appear in English, and with the publication here of Vasco Pratolini and Ennio Flaiano the whole picture of the modern Italian novel begins to take shape. First it becomes clear that the suspicion that the Italians were taking the French idea of *littérature engagée* too much to heart is only partly justified. Mort Italian novelists are provincial (so are all Italians) and Rome has no unifying influence in the way that Paris or London have. Pratolini is a Florentine, and a slum street near Santa Croce is all the world he needs. It is a world described with complete realism, in the sense that Rossellini gives reality in his films, and not merely the illusion of reality. It is amusing to think that while Pratolini's tarts disported themselves in this foetid alley, and his Fascists (the time is 1923) beat up a grocer for not contributing to party funds, the lights were twinkling in the Palazzo Malaspina above the town and Mr. Huxley's house-party was discussing Piero della Francesca and declaring that leaves were or were not barren. Wisely Pratolini gives no sense of there being any world but his and has given us a minutely detailed document of life during a particular time. Without the device of a central character and without dreaming of linking the various families in the Via del Corno with some contrived plot, he keeps his camera (the word is appropriate) continually on the move, from the coal merchant's bedroom where his wife has refused him her bed across to the Fascist headquarters, a cut to a view of the old Signora, mad and hideous, making obscene gestures to any man who looks up at her window—on and on the camera goes, cutting and panning, obviously fascinated by the sordid, yet full of pity and compassion. Moravia has the same fascination for the sordid, but he approaches it as a rather commercialised Dostoievskyan, whereas Pratolini is probably the most "unliterary" novelist in Europe to-day. Form, character development, plot, moral significance he knows not, and has no wish to know. He breaks all the rules, recreates life with all its rough corners and no polishing done. "Clumsy Life at her stupid work," Henry James once exclaimed, and Pratolini would agree with the sense of the remark, but call it a virtue to imitate the clumsiness and the stupidity. And how magnificently he succeeds will be obvious to all readers of *A Tale of Poor Lovers* from the first page. It puts Pratolini, with Berto, among the leaders of the *écrivains engagés*.

Flaiano lives in Rome and, unlike Pratolini, is concerned with the novel as a work of art *Mariam* is set in Abyssinia at the end of the Italian campaign, but it has little to do with war. The narrator spends a night with an Abyssinian maid, shoots her by accident and becomes obsessed with the idea that she has given him leprosy; he deserts, hoping to reach Italy and salve his guilt with the girl he loves, is tempted to kill on two or three occasions while he is forced to hide in the interior, and finally gives himself up on discovering that his sores were trifles and not leprous. He is pardoned and returns to Italy.

> While he is hiding in the interior he talks to a mule, saying,
>
> My dear . . . I have done one thing and another in order to see her again, and where has it got me? To where I will not see her again. I have committed the most stupid and childish crimes to enter paradise, and now here I am in this kind of hell, asking myself whether I have done well or ill.

From this and a few other remarks it is clear that Flaiano has in mind Camus's theory of the "absurd" and the narrator's adventures have a certain Sisyphean pointlessness. Camus has made that dullest of all myths, the myth of Sisyphus endlessly rolling a stone to the top of a hill only to see it roll down again, a basis for his philosophy of the absurd, and the danger of writing an "absurd" novel is that the reader may agree wholeheartedly about its absurdity and ask for some good, old-fashioned significance. *Mariam* seems to me to have avoided this danger completely, to succeed in that difficult task of combining reality with an imaginative unreality. Flaiano's characters are real, we know their minds, are interested in them, yet the account of the narrator's obsession has a hallucinatory quality rather reminiscent of Kafka. But above all Flaiano has narrative power, and as his novel, with exquisite judgment, gathers momentum, we realise that he is one of those rare novelists who entice us from page to page, our fingers itching to turn them. This is Flaiano's first novel, and it shows him capable of bringing into the Italian novel that necessary element, the artist.

The translation of the above novels is good, but what a pleasure it was to turn to the prose of Miss Emma Smith in *The Far Cry*. There is no one among the younger novelists, with the exception of Mr. William Sansom, who *writes* as well as she; constantly I re-read sentences with admiration and delight. *The Far Cry* is about a disappointed and uninteresting man, of whom Miss Smith says in one of her frequent

but charming little asperities, "Mr. Digby was at heart an honest man, but his moments of lucid honesty were few and far between, and as he grew older he had contrived to space them more and more widely"; he leaves his wife and takes his fourteen-year-old daughter with him to an Assamese tea plantation, where his other daughter lives with her husband; Mr. Digby dies, the married daughter is killed in an accident, and little Teresa stays on as housekeeper to her brother-in-law, with the possibility that one day he might marry her. There is no more, and about a third of the book is taken up with a brilliant, though irrelevant, account of the voyage out and the journey across India. Miss Smith merely tells us what happened to these few people, makes no attempt to make them pleasanter than they were, and leaves us to make what we like of the result. I found the last chapter, in Assam, which contains the heart of the book most moving, affecting in the way that such an incident would be in real life, if one knew the participants. Yet, Miss Smith has such talent and promise that a reviewer must criticise her in the highest category, and I feel the book has a fundamental fault of construction—the long voyage out. Evidently Miss Smith has made this voyage herself, and being so good a descriptive writer, she has enjoyed making her characters go through her own experiences—experiences which we finally see have very little to do with her novel. She has all the equipment to write about people and the interplay of character with an almost Jane Austen-like perception; documentary description doesn't give her talent full play. But it is obvious that hers will one day be a very important name indeed. MICHAEL SWAN

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The scale of the County Books series is almost Victorian in its amplitude. With the promise of fifty-six volumes, the enthusiast who wants to acquire the complete set will need to set aside more than £40 and a lot of shelf-space. Our grandfathers could be expected to rise to that sort of challenge, but it is a bold publisher who deploys on such a broad front nowadays; and one rejoices the more warmly therefore at the spectacle of courage rewarded. The books are attractive to handle, well printed, well illustrated with photographs, and in general well written. Mr. Vesey-Fitzgerald, the editor of the series, has not made an inverted snobbism of avoiding "big names," but in the main he has been willing to gamble on lesser-known writers who have the one prime virtue of a long-established and intimate understanding of their particular county. Sometimes he has gambled unwisely—the deplorable book on Gloucestershire which I am reviewing is sufficient evidence of that—but there is no gambling without occasional losses. More often he has sought out a writer who has just the talents needed, and the result is a gem—like Claude Berry's *Cornwall*.

Then, the County Books have broken away vigorously from the worst traditions of their kind. They include the unfashionable counties—remembering perhaps that people live in them also and have a measure of county pride and buy books. Phil Drabble's *Staffordshire* is striking proof that clotted creameries and lakes and rolling downs are not the only acceptable ingredients of an interesting landscape. The curious belief that tourism is based on a maniacal obsession with church architecture is sensibly rejected, and instead we are given what might be described as a county ecology—a description of its distinctive constituents and the living pattern which they combine to form. What the best of the County Books presents is a sense of atmosphere, a sketch of the nature of the place, an account of that organic community which unites the living and the dead, the natural data and the material additions, the beautiful and the commonplace. Thus, in his book about Cornwall, Mr. Claude Berry chooses his themes—tin and china clay, wrestling and pilchards and shipwrecks and so on—in order to trace for us the underlying pattern of Cornish life, the character of the landscape and the people. There is no attempt to pick out the best or to summarise the lot. As a Padstow man he draws most liberally from the part of Cornwall he knows best, and the result is an extremely personal picture. When I began reading Mr. Berry's book I thought of Cornwall as being—like its tin mines—largely worked out. The pixies and pilchards and starry-gazy-pie—I had had all I could take of them. Mr. Berry recaptured my interest and my old delight in his county, by showing it to me through his intensely Cornish eyes. He may be over-indulgent at times—only a Cornish patriot could admire Truro cathedral, surely!—but his zest for his native scene is irresistible and inspiring.

The peril of this kind of personal interpretation is that it demands a sure touch and a flair for picking out the revealing detail—gifts which are conspicuously lacking in Mr. Kenneth Hare's treatment of Gloucestershire. Mr. Hare's first anxiety appears to be to present himself as a poet. His next is to work off a lot of vituperative feeling about the Puritans and the late Kaiser. Any desire he may have to write about Gloucestershire comes well down the list and produces only a few scrappy interludes amidst a great deal of posturing. "My endeavour," he says, "is to be evocative rather than exhaustive"—but it is difficult to see what he hopes to evoke by drawing the reader's attention to the shelling of Paris, the decline of Venice, Cromwell at Drogheda, teetotallers, or a description in Wardour Street English of Edward IV's arrival in London after Tewkesbury:

> Bright eyes bid the soldiers welcome. Lovers meet and embrace. Monks chant. Swaggerers brawl. Church bells crash. Wine-fountains splash. And all is intoxication, vociferation, devotion and song.

With so much hurrying up and down the centuries in a literary way, Mr. Hare is perhaps too bothered to attend to little points of accuracy. But more serious than his occasional errors is his inability to select telling detail. W. H. Davies's slight connection with Gloucestershire is seized with enthusiasm and leads to Milton, Horace and Gaudier-Brzeska, but there is virtually nothing about the Forest of Dean or the industrial Stroud Valley: even the Severn Bore is passed over cursorily, and Mr. Hare's account of Severn Salmon is limited to a description of how he likes them cooked. In short, as a picture of a county this is no more than a tedious parade of personal crotchets and affectations. On this occasion Gloucestershire must envy the luck of the Cornish.
DESMOND HAWKINS

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Looking back over the first half of this ferocious century, perhaps the most astonishing thing about it is that it began before the Labour Party was born. There had been, it is true, some significant stirrings in the Victorian twilight but—apart from the dock strike and Bloody Sunday in Trafalgar Square—there was much less tumult in the streets in the closing years of the Queen's reign than at its beginning. The London dockers and Annie Besant's match girls had broken the crust of Victorian complacency in the Eighties, the Fabians were working away like beavers in the back parlours of Bloomsbury and Bayswater, Tillett and Tom Mann were storming the land in the wind and the rain, Bernard Shaw—in Churchill's sparkling phrase—was "dancing bespangled like Jack Frost in the Socialist sunshine," and on the green benches at Westminster a solitary homespun Scotsman with a Sherlock Holmes cap and a patriarchal beard sat like the prophet of doom in the innermost citadel of reaction.

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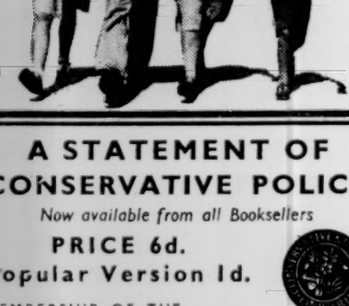

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saw that nothing real would ever be done for the workers until they decided to do it for themselves. And it was his inspiration, backed by the cunning of his handsome compatriot Ramsay MacDonald, that moved the Trades Union Congress at Plymouth in 1899 to summon a special meeting of Socialists and organised workers to consider forming a new and independent Labour Party for the purpose of fighting elections and securing separate working-class representation in Parliament.

It is the story of what followed that historic meeting in the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, on February 27, 1900, that Mr. Williams unfolds so brilliantly. There were only 129 delegates at the meeting and they came from 65 trade unions and three Socialist Societies. Between them all they represented only 568,000 organised workers, fewer than any one of the five big unions affiliated to Transport House to-day. As Mr. Williams points out, only four of the unions at the Memorial Hall that morning had more than 20,000 members, and the electricians could only muster 950—"a sharp reminder this of how little the industrial pattern of that time resembled our own." The biggest union was the Amalgamated Society of Engineers with 85,000 members and the smallest—but most vociferous, apparently—was the Waiters' Union with 200. Of the specifically Socialist Societies present, the I.L.P.—with Hardie and MacDonald in the van—had 13,000 members. Hyndman's more bellicose Social Democratic Federation had 9,000 and the Fabian Society only 861. The Co-ops had been invited but refused to attend. And, except for the leaders of 29,000 pitmen in Lancashire and Cheshire, there were no miners present when the Labour Party was born.

Nor did the rest of the world pay much attention to the event at the time. On the first day of the conference the newspapers were full of the surrender of General Cronje and the great fire at the Grand Theatre, Islington, and next day the relief of Ladysmith gave even the more intelligent journals a grand excuse to ignore the Farringdon Street affair altogether. And who can blame them? How could even the wisest wizards in Fleet Street have divined that only a few yards away an argumentative gathering of bearded intelligensia and horny-handed sons of toil—as the phrase went in those days—were founding what was to become the most powerful Party in the land? It is a pity Mr. Williams does not give the roll-call of the Memorial Hall delegates. I can think only of three of them who are still alive—Bernard Shaw, E. R. Pease and Margaret Bondfield.

Mr. Williams, who played quite a part himself in the later stages, tells the whole story with great verve and clarity and gives us a fascinating account not only of the measures but of the men who made the movement: Tillett, Mann and Burns; Hardie, Hyndman and Shaw; Cunninghame Graham, Wells and the Webbs; MacDonald, Snowden and Clynes; Henderson, Crooks and Thorne; Blatchford, "Dangle" and Brailsford; Lansbury, Maxton and Grayson; Greenwood, Wheatley and Jowett; Morrison, Attlee and Bevin; Griffiths, Bevan and Cripps.

Perhaps the most thrilling part of the whole story is the account of the great dock strike of 1899, when Tillett, Burns and Mann bulldozed the way for the politicians. There is one story of the strike, however, that Mr. Williams does not tell. But it should go on the record. Ben Tillett told it to me himself just before he died. One day, when the strike was going badly and the men were drifting back, Ben's resolution began to droop, and he told Tom Mann the time had come to call the whole thing off. Tom Mann urged him to give it another day, and Ben went home to his humble lodging in a side-street in Poplar. When he got there his landlady told him a priest had been waiting for him all afternoon in the kitchen. When he went in the priest was reading the latest Sherlock Holmes adventure in the *Strand Magazine*. When the priest looked up Ben saw it was Cardinal Manning. The Cardinal asked him how long the men could stick it and if they were "in a state of grace." Ben said he did not know about that, but they were certainly in a state of hunger. The Cardinal then asked if they were mostly Irishmen and good Catholics and Tillet—who was himself a small bit of an Irishman and a big bit of a pagan—said that was so. The following day the Cardinal offered his services as mediator. As a result the Government appointed the Conciliation Board which gave the dockers their "tanner." This was in John Burn's famous phrase "the shining orb." But as it rose over dockland hardly anybody—not even Tillett himself—realised it was the first gleam of the Socialist dawn.

In these days of quotas, statistical men and monthly digests, it is refreshing to read Mr. Williams's account of the pioneers and the grim flesh-and-blood struggle of the early days before the battle was transferred from the barricades to tthe boardrooms. It would be a good thing, indeed, for all Socialists, however exalted, if they sat down occasionally and remembered their origins.

IAN MACKAY

NEW MUSIC PERIODICALS

Music Today. No. 1. Edited by ROLLO MYERS. *Dobson.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
The Score. No. 1. Edited by WILLIAM GLOCK. *I.T. Publications.* 5*s.*

Two new musical periodicals make their bow. *Music Today*, the organ of the International Society for Contemporary Music, is to appear annually; *The Score*, three times a year, thus coming into competition with those well-established and semi-learned quarterlies, *Music and Letters* (edited by Eric Blom) and *The Music Review* (edited by Geoffrey Sharp). In this field we are, if anything, over provided for; what we need is a lively and intelligent monthly, independent of any publishing house, and containing full accounts of important musical activities throughout the world. It is difficult for the musical amateur to discover which new composers and what events of the season have aroused most interest in America or Italy, or even across the Channel. *The Score* makes a move in the right direction with an article on the work of Boris Blacher, a leading figure in post-war German music (he is partly Russian); Mr. Kosuszek stimulates our interest in Blacher, but fails to include even a skeleton list of his works, and refers to a set of variations on the well-known Paganini theme without informing us for what instrument, or instruments, it is written. There are a pair of sound "encyclopaedia" articles, by Edmond Appia on Ornamentation in French Classical Music, and by J. A. Westrup on Monteverdi's Madrigals. Henry Boys, usually an interesting critic, devotes the first part of a long essay on Stravinsky to an exposition of the aesthetic views of the Russian writer, Boris de Schloezer; these consist of that kind of theorizing by category, so popular abroad, which explains little in our actual experience of music. Douglas Newton, discussing the marriage of poetry with music, comes to an austere conclusion: that the words of songs must always be specially written "with no pretensions to being poetry;" but he conducts his argument without mentioning the names of Goethe, Schubert or Wolf, of Verlaine, Fauré or Debussy—which is insular of him, to say the least. The best thing in this first number of *The Score* (far too flimsily bound, by the way) is a reprint of Hindemith's Introduction to his famous *Craft of Musical Composition* (of which copies are now available from Messrs. Schott and Co.).

Music Today, though it costs half-a-crown more, offers better value. The International Society for Contemporary Music is often accused of cliquishness, of the worship of novelty and experiment for their own sakes; but its Journal is open-minded, good-humoured, widely informative, and often highly entertaining. Mr. Rollo Myers need only maintain the standard of his first number to make a notable contribution to international musical life. The Journal is

bilingual (an English text being accompanied by a French précis, and vice versa); its only fault, as a piece of book-making, is that the inside margins are so small, and the bulky volume (162 pages) so tightly sewn, that it is difficult to read the ends (or beginnings) of the lines.

Professor Dent was the T.S.C.M.'s first and most notable President, and he leads off with such a contribution as every editor prays for: an account of the early days, when the Society was struggling into existence at Salzburg and Venice, written in a vein of drily ironic comedy. Let us hope that some publisher will persuade this brilliant raconteur to write his reminiscences. Mr. Myers has also secured a second paper from the same pen, on Problems of Modern Opera. The Professor's well-known views on this subject often strike me, I must own, as topsy-turvy; he is a case-book specimen of reaction against environment. Growing up in a period when the aria and the great singer were considered all-important, he has come to despise these elements to a degree which would astonish Mozart. In Professor Dent's view the chief inanimate villain is the gramophone (and, to a lesser extent, the radio); the live villain that terrible creature, the connoisseur (an Aunt Sally connoisseur, of course, to whom the wildest opinions are freely attributed). Virtue is to be found exclusively in the youngest and most naive members of the Sadler's Wells audience, who follow the plot and always have a jolly good time, no matter how the music is performed. When they have seen the same opera several times and start making those abominable comparisons which audiences have always made throughout history, presumably they are written off as fallen angels. Such an attitude is peculiar to a country like ours, where opera is only beginning to be an established national institution; in Dresden, Vienna, or Milan the young opera-goer has always grown up in a world of passionate partisanship for the heroes and heroines of the lyric stage. The most valuable part of Professor Dent's article is his list of the six operas which have moved him most deeply during the last half-century: *Pelléas*, *Wozzeck*, *Doktor Faust* (Busoni), *Peter Grimes*, *Christophe Colombe* (Milhaud) and *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* (Bartók). It will be observed that only two of the six have yet reached our opera-houses.

Apart from specialist contributions from various quarters of the globe, the remainder of the I.S.C.M.'s Journal is devoted to a discussion of the problems of modern music, with particular reference to the subject of atonalism. The current situation is pessimistically surveyed in two well-written essays. Martin Cooper analyses with perception the Tchaikovsky vogue, and diagnoses lack of faith as the root of all our troubles: "A crisis in the purely technical development of music . . . has coincided with a crisis in the intellectual and emotional development of the human race. Music . . . is therefore experimental at a time when ordinary people ask of it the exact opposite of experiment." The Parisian critic, Fred. Goldbeck, sees that the tradition-challenging, boundary-extending 19th-century world is dead, simply because there are no "wrong notes" left which have not already been used; "where romanticists rejoiced in their revolutionary individualism, contemporaries are terrified at their failure to find anything to yield to or fight against. Instead of challenging public and critics, they never stop challenging and censuring themselves." The veteran French composer, Charles Koechlin, who writes pointfully and gracefully, cannot resist teasing the 12-tone vanguard: why not adopt quarter-tones, which would allow them to construct a 24-tone-row? Composers, he insists (quoting the authority of Ravel) ought not to be so frightened of imitating other composers; there may be much of value in the 12-tone technique, but composers must show modesty, and refrain from claiming that their style (or any other style) is the "only authentic language" of the day. At the end of the volume, several composers reply to an invitation from the editor to define briefly their attitude towards atonal and 12-tonal music; and in René Leibowitz we find an instance of the totalitarian mentality M. Koechlin has in mind: his reply takes the form of an open letter to Schönberg, which might be an open letter from Thorez to Stalin: "*il n'a jamais douté* [I quote from the précis] *de la justesse et de l'inévitabilité du système sérial qui lui a fourni le moyen de résoudre tous les problèmes se rapportant à la composition musicale.*" In contradistinction, the reply of Lennox Berkeley suggests the cool voice of reason. His main point is that absence of key precludes modulation, and absence of modulation produces monotony. "Tonal harmony is based on certain mathematical facts causing aural satisfaction, whereas the twelve-note system . . . is arbitrary. A correspondence in vibrations produces the relationship between tonic and dominant, but I cannot see that any reason in particular determines the order of notes in a 'row.' My ear may not be sensitive enough, but it does not feel a necessity for the initial note of a series, once all twelve tones have been sounded." It was the absence of any link with the mathematical basis of music which led Hindemith also, in his later works and his current teaching, to reject an egalitarian attitude towards the twelve notes of the chromatic scale. This is an objection which cannot easily be answered. DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

Symphonies. BEETHOVEN: No. 5 (Paris Conservatoire/Schuricht. AK2253-6). A superbly energetic, unaffected performance, distinguished by sensible tempi (on the fast side), clear-cut lines and avoidance of personal quirks. The recording is resonant but clear, so that the carefully blended detail, which is among the features of this splendid performance, is never lost. Another issue of this symphony will not be needed for some time. SCHUBERT: No. 8 ("Unfinished") (Philharmonia/Kletzki. LX1222-4). Disappointing. A portentously solemn performance. The first movement drags unendurably. Recording edgy and without depth. Old Vienna Phil. set (H.M.V.) still unrivalled.

Concertos. BEETHOVEN: Fourth Piano Concerto G major (Rubinstein/R.P.O./Beecham. DB6732-5). An extremely brilliant, carefully thought out, but ultimately superficial performance. Listen to the opening statement by the piano, first in the Rubinstein set, then in the Schnabel, and the difference of conception is immediately apparent. In the Rondo alone Rubinstein's sheer dexterity gives him the advantage, but the Schnabel set is on the whole greatly to be preferred. The recording of the new issue leaves much to be desired: the orchestral tone is not particularly faithful and the piano sounds at times decidedly tubby. BRAHMS: First Piano Concerto, D minor (Arrau/Philharmonia/Cameron DB9250-5. Special order). All things considered, a remarkably fine performance—actually the best available. The conducting of Basil Cameron always gives me the impression of extreme diffidence, and in this set the orchestral playing, though accurate enough, does not live up to the tremendous sweep and energy of the pianist's conception. But the discrepancy is not continuously felt, and the final impression is satisfying. Recording balance very well managed. VITALI: Ciaccona (arr. Respighi) (Gioconda de Vito/Philharmonia/Erede. DB6936-7). This splendid set of variations, which put one in mind of a Baroque monument, is by Tommaso, son of the more famous Giovanni Battista, Vitali. It was originally written for solo violin. Respighi's accompaniment, though in somewhat better style than this composer displayed on other occasions, is rather over-powering; but the piece is so eloquently played and so well recorded, that objections soon give way to simple admiration. TURINA: *Rapsodia Sinfonica* (Moura Lympany/Philharmonia/Süsskind. C3913). There is always room for the brief, one-movement concerto, so long as it is effective and melodious. No more need be claimed for this piece. Miss

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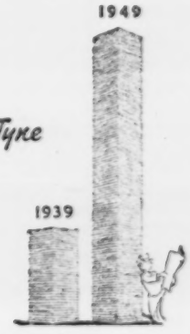

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Lympany does easy justice to its qualities, but the recording is unpleasantly shrill. In this respect Eileen Joyce's record (Parlophone), made before the war, is distinctly preferable, and the balance too is better.

Miscellaneous Orchestral. RAVEL: *Le Tombeau de Couperin* (L.P.O./Jean Martinon. AK1838-9). One of the most completely satisfactory orchestral records which have come my way for some time. The woodwind solos, in which this work abounds, are skilfully characterised, and the ensemble is beautifully balanced. RAVEL: *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* (Turin Sym. Orch./Erede. AK2207-8). The conductor is evidently not interested in this kind of music: Ansermet (or Martinon, to judge by the *Tombeau*) would seem the obvious choice. This performance is pedestrian and wholly lacking in charm. The recording is confused and unpleasing. A sensitive reading of these *Valses* is available in the original version for piano solo (Tristan Risselin—H.M.V. JO54-5. Special order). ROSSINI (arr. Respighi): *La Boutique Fantasque* (Rome Augusteo/Serafin. C3910-12). There is much to enjoy in this brightly recorded set, though in point of style and recording it is not, I think, the equal of the old L.P.O./Goossens issue (H.M.V.). In particular, the final fugato is noticeably untidy. Recommended as a fairly satisfactory interim set. MENDELSSOHN: *Son and Stranger*—Overture (Bournemouth Orch./Schwarz. C3899). This seldom heard, but grateful and homely piece, is part of some music which Mendelssohn composed, in 1829, for an operetta entitled "The Return from Abroad." The performance is excellent and the recording quite good. WAGNER: *Die Götterdämmerung*—Siegfried's Journey to the Rhine; *Die Walküre*—Ride of the Valkyries (Vienna Phil./Furtwängler. DB6949-50). The performance fails to convey the romantic beauty, and above all the wonderful colouristic effects, of "Siegfried's Journey." Time after time we anticipate a thrill which does not materialise. The recording is curiously gloomy and lacking in the higher frequencies.

Chamber Music and Piano Solo. PROKOFIEV: First Violin Sonata, F minor, Op 80 (Menuhin/Gazelle. DB9376-8. Special Order). An extremely beautiful work, far less superficial in feeling than most of Prokofiev's music. The violin writing is particularly original and effective. An impressive performance, very well recorded. BLOCH: *Nigun* (Improvisation) (Isaac Stern/Zakin. LB84). Played with such noble eloquence, and with so astonishing a technical mastery, this rhapsody acquires some of the significance of a Rembrandt drawing. A former recording (by Theo Olof) is by no means negligible and the piano tone is somewhat better rendered than in the present version. But Isaac Stern's performance is irresistible. BEETHOVEN: Rondo, G. major, Op 51 No. 2 (Denis Matthews, DX1595). A very pleasant piece, if not of much importance, to which Mr. Matthews gives the benefit of his delicate and charming touch. Recording excellent. CHOPIN: Nocturne, C minor, Op 48, No. 1; Mazurka, E minor, Op 41, No. 2 (Malcuzynski LX1228.) It cannot be easy to play—or to record—the central section of this Nocturne so that it does not sound clumsy and out-of-scale. On the whole this recording succeeds. The Mazurka is entirely delightful. CHOPIN: Preludes, Op 28, Nos 1-14 (Moiseiwitsch C3905-6). A cloud of despair falls round me at the mere thought of this set. How could so conscientious, so experienced a pianist, and one who has for so many years given us example after example of sensitive and musicianly playing—how could he commit to shellac, and having (presumably) heard, pass as satisfactory a performance so inconceivably crude and perverse? Unfortunately I have not the space to criticise this set in detail, but readers are invited to listen, for example, to the Second Prelude: the galumphing bass, the neglect of Chopin's markings, the inexpressive playing of the melody—these are symptomatic of the whole performance. LISZT: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 8 (Cor de Groot, E11467). A very skilful record. The piece itself is exasperatingly foolish, but Mr. de Groot plays it in fine rhapsodic style and with real brilliance. VILLA-LOBOS: Two Studies; CASTELNUOVO-TEDESCO: Tarantella, A minor (Segovia LX1229). I doubt whether the famous guitarist has ever made a better record than this. The Villa-Lobos pieces are curious and interesting, the Tarantella an attractive showpiece.

Vocal. STRAUSS: *Der Rosenkavalier*—Act 2: Presentation of the Silver Rose and Finale (Schwarzkopf Seefried/Weber/Hermann/Vienna Phil/Ackermann. LX1225-7.) If Elisabeth Schwarzkopf does not succeed in equalling Mme Schumann's performance as Sophie, Irmgard Seefried is, I think, definitely superior to Maria Olszewska as Octavian. It is, of course, a pity that their voices do not present a greater contrast to one another (Octavian should always have a *mezzo* quality), but their duet has the grace and tenderness which are implicit in the text and music. In the Finale, Ludwig Weber, as Ochs, sings with a beauty of tone most unusual in basses, and he does not (as many singers do) guy the part. The orchestral playing leaves something to be desired, at several important points; but the tone is, of course, a great improvement on the old set, and the balance with the voices is excellent. MUSSORGSKY: *Boris Godunov*—Farewell of Boris (Act IV) (Boris Christoff Philharmonia Dobrowen. DB6935.) This singer, whom we are to have the pleasure of hearing at Covent Garden, later in this season, would appear to have an even finer voice than Raphael Arié, whose record of the same music I praised a month or two since. M. Christoff sings less robustly—manages, in fact, to sound sick—which is very effective. At the same time, this disc cannot be said to displace the earlier one, since it stops short just before the entry of the chorus, which is particularly well managed in the Arié record. NICOLAI: *Lustige Weiber*—"Nun eilt herbei" (Maria Cebotari/Vienna Phil/Prohaska. DB6939.) The second of Cebotari's posthumous records hardly confirms the excellent impression made by the first. To be sure, she brings a fine sense of character to the delivery of this enchanting scena; and the recording is a treat. But her coloratura is far from neat, the tone often very unsteady and the sense of fun conspicuous by its absence. GOUNOD: *Faust*—"Il était un Roi de Thulé" and the Jewel Song (Act 3) (Victoria de Los Angeles/Orch/Süsskind. DB6938.) If this admirable soprano lacks the "whiteness" of tone that best suits the Jewel Song, she makes up for it by technical assurance and an emotional warmth that is most appealing. This record should please a large public.

Educational. WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: Selections from his poetry. (Read by Stephen Murray. DX1601-2.) This is a most welcome addition to E.M.I.'s excellent series of verse readings. As he has shown us so often "on the air," Stephen Murray is the possessor of a really beautiful and sympathetic voice. It is also extremely resonant, and on the whole the recording deals successfully with this quality, though occasionally one feels that the reader is uncomfortably close to the microphone. As an interpreter he seems to me to succeed best (indeed perfectly) in the lyrical poems, such as "The Solitary Reaper," "I wandered lonely as a cloud," and "To Sleep." In the extracts from *The Prelude* the reader's care of the sense has led to a slight loss of rhythmical contour. In every other way this seems to me an exemplary issue. The absence of affectation—of the Beautiful Poetry Voice—is particularly cheering.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

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The usual prizes are offered for an extract, not exceeding 150 words, from any book of prose or poetry which competitors would like to have seen in our Selected Autumn List, but which unfortunately has not yet been written; *e.g.*, a new novel by E. M. Forster, a new detective story by Dorothy Sayers, or a new collection of short stories by Aldous Huxley.

Report by J. B. Roderic

How they would have gleamed and glittered in our list of Autumn Books, these novels by E. M. Forster, that Kafka fragment *The Pit* ("discovered by Max Brod"), Max's *Autobiography* and E. C. Bentley's *Post-war Biography!* What a *mêlée* of library subscribers would be struggling for all the new Wimseys—*Quills and Fountain Pens; Gin a Body Meet a Body; Lord Peter's Whimsy!* What scrambling for that unique collaboration (foreshadowed by Fergie) between our two detective story *divas*, Miss Sayers and Miss Marsh!

The titles of *The Intelligent Child's Guide to the Modern World*, by Hilaire Belloc (Isabel Finlayson) and of *The Extended Reminiscences of Old Possum* (Terence Moore) aroused hopes that the extracts did not quite satisfy. E. W. Fordham produced a very

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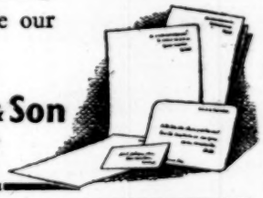

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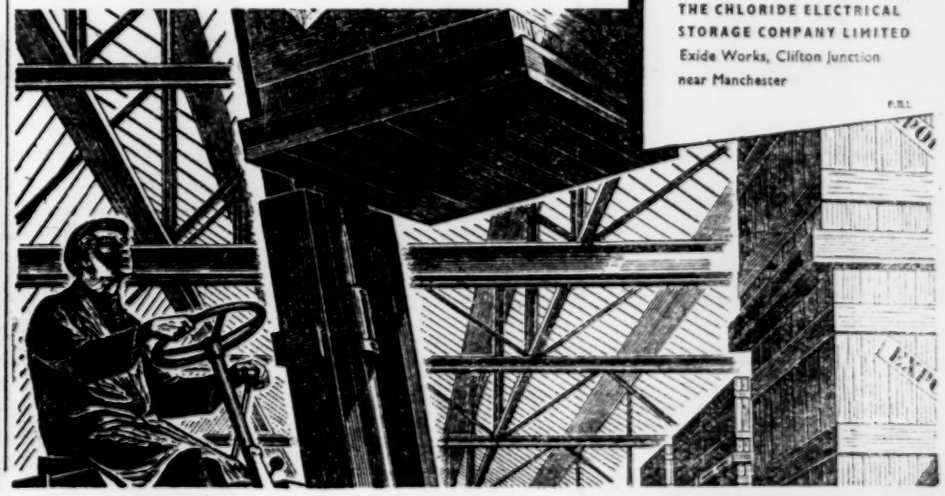

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